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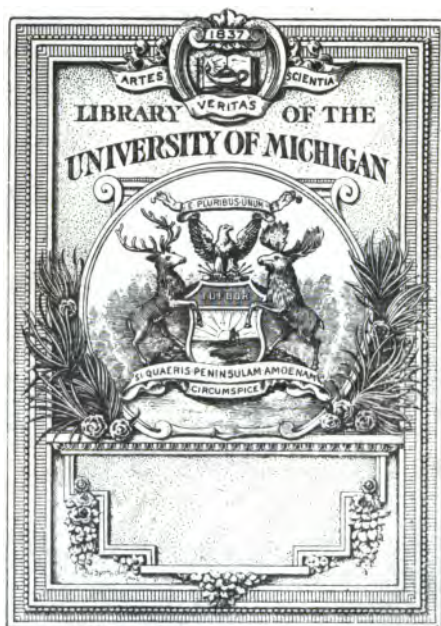
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From the
Rev. R. H. Mearns.
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JEWISH WITNESSES

THAT

JESUS IS THE CHRIST.

EDITED BY

RIDLEY H^W₃ HERSCHELL.

"We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write."—JOHN i. 45.

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INTRODUCTION.

It has been a common complaint of infidels, and opposers of the truth as it is in Jesus, that men have never been left unbiassed in the matter of religion; that parents and teachers have always been urgent to enforce their own dogmas on the youthful mind; and that thus men grow up disposed to retain and defend these dogmas, instead of dispassionately examining them, in order to ascertain their truth or falsehood. But if this objection were sustained, it would be inconsistent to confine it to religion; on the same principle we ought not to bias the opinions of a youth in regard to matters moral, economical, or political; but leave him, on all such subjects, to form his axioms and code of laws after his own fashion.

Indeed, to be truly consistent, we should give no instruction at all; since all instruction, in so far as it is received, gives a decided bias to the mind. If a man believes his religion to be *true*, it is the thing of all others which he is bound to enforce on the mind of his pupil; if he does not believe the religion he professes to be true, then, certainly, he had better leave religious instruction to be communicated by some one else.

But though it is easy to show the absurdity of the above-mentioned complaint, there is a half-truth in it, which gives it its point and its danger. In a professedly Christian country like this, where a certain amount of religious profession is reputable, the great bulk of such religionists maintain hereditary dogmas, without examination, and without any certain conviction of their truth. This not only gives a handle to the infidel, but stumbles and confuses men of thoughtful minds, who, ignorant of true religion, yet feeling that man is destined for intercourse with the Infinite and Invisible, perceive with dismay that there is no reality in the religion of the men who surround them; that their doleful confessions of being

"miserable sinners," their passionate outcries for pardon and spiritual life, are nothing more than a dramatic performance, which it is considered decorous to go through at least once a week. I believe that amid the motley groups of worldly society, there are scattered not a few of these thoughtful ones, who, disgusted with the unconscious hypocrisy of those around them, and kept aloof, by prejudices of various kinds, from the true children of God, whose confessions and aspirations are the language of the heart, finally betake themselves to some one of those refuges of lies, which modern Pantheism has swept, and garnished, and adorned with the fruits and flowers of poetry and philosophy.

As an answer to the infidel, therefore, and a way-mark to the doubting and perplexed, the testimony of a Jew, that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, must always be of great value. In him, all the prejudices of education are against this belief; he is not only devoid of that bias in favour of Christian dogmas, of which the free-thinker complains, but he has a bias in the opposite direction; whatever deduction, there-

fore, the infidel makes from the testimony of one educated in the Christian faith, he ought, in common fairness and consistency, to throw, as an additional weight, into the scale of Jewish testimony to the truth of Christianity. And the earnest and thoughtful man, who feels that if there be any truth in religion, it must be something very different from the heartless formality around him which bears that name, ought to be convinced, that there is some weighty truth in those doctrines, that have overcome the united amount of resistance presented by family ties, educational prejudices, and self-interest.

The present assemblage of Jewish Witnesses that Jesus is the Christ, has one peculiarity that distinguishes it from any previous collection of a similar kind. With the exception of those two who lived more than a hundred years ago, they are all my own personal acquaintance. I know their manner of life from their conversion until now; and can testify that they are followers of Christ, not in word only, but in deed and in truth. Most of the narratives were written at my own request, and have appeared in a detached form at various times

during the last four years; they are now for the first time collected together, and I trust the united testimony to the same truth may prove a blessing both to Jews and Gentiles.

It is generally admitted that our feelings and opinions are greatly modified by our association with others; that we unconsciously imbibe the sentiments of those around us. But the following testimonies to the truth of Christianity are entirely independent of each other; they are given by men of different nations;—of England, Poland, Germany, Holland, and Barbary;—the ages at which they were brought to the knowledge of the truth, vary from twenty to sixty years old; and there are many other points of contrast in their personal history. Their only entire point of agreement, was, hatred to that faith which they were afterwards compelled by the force of truth to embrace. At this moment they belong to various sections of the Church of Christ, to which circumstances or preference have led them to attach themselves; but those who peruse their statements will perceive, that the non-essential matters which so often divide Christians, are of too small account in their

eyes to be once mentioned. They have been taught by one Spirit, and called in one hope of their calling; and the sum of their united testimony is: That man, as a fallen sinner, can only be saved, and reconciled to God, by Jesus Christ; and as a polluted sinner, can only be cleansed and sanctified by the effectual operation of the Holy Spirit.

I had not intended to state that the first on the list is a narration of my own mental struggles; but I have been urged to do so by many friends who thought it might give additional interest to it; and, as others of my Jewish brethren have not hesitated to make a similar avowal, I see no reason why I should withhold mine.

RIDLEY H. HERSCHELL.

JEWISH WITNESSES

THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST.

JEWISH WITNESS,—No. I.

R. H. H.

HAVING been favoured by God with pious parents, their great care was to impress my mind from childhood with a profound reverence for God, and for the Holy Scriptures. I was taught to repeat the morning and evening prayers with great solemnity; and on the feast days my attention was particularly drawn to the impressive confession in our Liturgy, "It is because of our sins we are driven away from our land," &c. On the Day of Atonement I used to see my devout parents weep when they repeated the pathetic confession that follows the enumeration of the sacrifices which were

appointed by God to be offered up for the sins of omission and commission; and many a time I shed sympathetic tears as I joined them in saying, that we have now no temple, no high priest, no altar, and no sacrifices. As I advanced in years and understanding, my religious impressions became stronger; fear and trembling often took hold upon me; and what was then my refuge,—what the balm for my wounded spirit? Repeating more prayers, and asking God to accept the calves of my lips. This satisfied my mind at the time; but the satisfaction arose from ignorance of the character of God as a holy and a just Being, and of my own state as a guilty sinner, whose prayers, proceeding from unclean lips, could not be accepted as a sweet savour by the thrice holy Lord God of Sabaoth.

I continued in this state of mind until I was about sixteen years of age. During this period of my life, I often spent three sleepless nights in the week, studying the Talmud, and other Hebrew works. I also committed to memory several chapters of the prophets every week, in order that I might become sufficiently familiar with the Hebrew language to correspond

in it. At this period I became acquainted with a Polish Jew, who had studied several years at the University of Berlin, and consequently had become acquainted with Gentile literature. He strongly advised me to give up the study of the Talmud, and devote myself to the study of German and secular literature. After a hard struggle of mind, I resolved to follow his advice, and accordingly went to ———. Here there was not only a change in the character of my studies, but an entire change in my habits and mode of life. Many things that I formerly regarded as essential parts of my religion, were considered by my fellow-students *alt modisch* (old fashioned), quite unfit for the *aufgeklärten* (enlightened). At first my conscience was much disturbed, and I was often very unhappy ; but, after a time, these feelings wore off ; I conformed to the manners of my fellow-students, and I also “lived like a Christian,” as the Jews in those parts are wont to say of such of their brethren as have no fear of God before their eyes. I formed acquaintance with many young Gentiles ; and this I could now do with impunity, as neither they nor I troubled ourselves about each other’s

religion ; neither of us, in reality, having any, although they called themselves Christians, and I was a Jew. The only thing that reminded me what people I belonged to, was the look of contempt I received now and then from Christians ; and the little children in the streets calling after me, "Jew, Jew." Then, indeed, I realized that I belonged to the people who have become a proverb and a byeword among the Gentiles.

I well remember the first time I ever heard of one of my brethren becoming a convert to Christianity. It was a young Jew, who was apprenticed to a tradesman in the town where I studied. My idea of Jewish converts to Christianity was, that they renounced their national privileges and obligations ; that they separated themselves from the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and publicly joined themselves to the ungodly Gentiles, who live without God, and without hope in the world. Although at this time I had laid aside many of the outward observances of the Jewish religion, I had still a strong attachment to the fundamental doctrines of the Jewish faith, because I believed them to be

of Divine origin. The idea of any Jew becoming a Christian, therefore, seemed to me a dreadful apostacy ; and I regarded the youth above-mentioned with mingled pity and contempt, as one who had forsaken God, and given up all hope of eternal life.

I pass over in silence several years of my life, which were devoted to the world, and the things of the world ; during which time I kept up such a measure of conformity to the customs of my religion as I considered respectable and consistent ; but my early convictions and impressions were faded and forgotten ; and I belonged to that class whom the Psalmist designates “ men of the world, which have their portion in this life.”

In process of time the Lord laid His afflicting hand upon me. The death of my beloved mother, whose tenderness to me I remember to this day with the deepest gratitude and affection, was a heavy stroke to me, and plunged me into the utmost grief. I was then visited with sickness, and my conscience became much disturbed. What I then endured can only be expressed in the language of the sixth Psalm. I solemnly vowed to become

very religious; I resolved to fast one day in every week, to repeat many prayers, and show kindness and charity to the poor. But this could not pacify my guilty conscience, as the study of German literature had weakened my confidence in religious observances,—had driven me from my own religion, and given me nothing in its place. One day I was in acute distress of mind, feeling, as David expresses it, that I had sunk “in deep mire, where there is no standing;” that all my own efforts to free myself were of no avail, my struggles only made me sink deeper and deeper. For the first time in my life I prayed extempore. I cried out “O God! I have no one to help me, and I dare not approach thee, for I am guilty; help, O help me, for the sake of my father Abraham, who was willing to offer up his son Isaac, have mercy upon me, and impute his righteousness unto me.” But there was no answer from God,—no peace to my wounded spirit. I felt as if God had forsaken me; as if the Lord had cast me off for ever, and would be favourable no more. I fully understood the words of the Psalmist, “Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so

that I am not able to look up ; they are more than the hairs of my head ; therefore my heart faileth me," (Psa. xl. 12); and I felt that all my devotional exercises were what the prophet Isaiah was instructed to declare the sacrifices and offerings of the Jews in his days to be,—vain oblations, an abomination in the sight of God.

I was far from my home and relatives ; and my gay companions, seeing I was depressed in spirits, though ignorant of the real cause of this depression, earnestly urged me to frequent the theatres, and other public amusements, to cheer my mind. At first this partially succeeded ; but the merciful kindness of God left me not thus to my own devices, but graciously interposed, and again roused me to seek after more solid happiness.

God, in his tender mercy, had again disturbed and disquieted my conscience so much, that I fully realised the words of the Psalmist, "I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long, for my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken ; I have roared by reason of the dis-

quietness of my heart." (Psalm xxxviii. 6—8.) I had no peace nor rest ; but wherever I went, or however I was employed, I carried about with me a sense of misery that was intolerable. I could say with Job, "The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit." (Job vi. 4.)

One morning I went to purchase an article in a shop, little knowing that God had there stored up for me the "pearl of great price," which He was about to give me "without money and without price." The article I purchased was wrapped up in a leaf of the Bible, which contained a portion of the sermon on the mount. The shopkeeper was, probably, an infidel, who thought the Bible merely waste paper ; but God over-ruled the evil for good. As I was walking home my eyes glanced on the words : "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." This arrested my attention, and I read the whole passage with deep interest.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit

the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for their's is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt, v. 3—10.)

I was much struck with the sentiments contained in this passage, and felt very desirous to see the book of which it was a portion ; I had no idea what book it was, never having seen a New Testament. A few days after, God directed my footsteps to the house of an acquaintance, on whose table lay a copy of the New Testament. Impelled by curiosity I took it up, and in turning over the leaves beheld the very passage that had interested me so much. I immediately borrowed it, and began to read it with great avidity. At first I felt quite bewildered, and was so shocked by the constant recurrence of the name of Jesus, that I repeatedly cast the book away. At length I determined to read it through

When I came to the twenty-third chapter of the gospel of Matthew, I was astonished at the full disclosure of the nature of Pharisaism, contained in it; and Christ's lamentation over Jerusalem, in the concluding part: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" affected me even to tears. In reading the account of the crucifixion, the meekness and love of Jesus of Nazareth astonished me; and the cruel hatred manifested against him by the priests and rulers in Israel, excited within me a feeling of compassion for him, and of indignation against his murderers. But I did not as yet see any connexion between the sufferings of Jesus and my sins.

I will not detain my readers by relating the thoughts suggested by the gospels of Mark and Luke, but proceed to speak of that which took the strongest hold on my mind, the gospel of John. The interview between Jesus and Nicodemus, narrated in the third chapter rivetted my attention. I could by this

time in a great measure sympathize with Nicodemus in his opening address to Jesus: "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him." (John iii. 2.) And I was as much astonished as Nicodemus himself at the saying of Jesus: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (ver. 3.) If He had told me to fast, to give alms, to go morning and evening to the synagogue, to repeat the prayers twice or three times a day, and that then I should see the kingdom of God, I could have understood it; but when told of a new birth, I was ready to exclaim with Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" Christ's explanation of the reason of His sacrifice, by a reference to the serpent lifted up in the wilderness, struck me very forcibly: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (v. 14, 15.) I had many times read the account of the brazen serpent, but had never understood its spiritual import before; nor,

perceived that it was the forgiving love of God that healed the poor Israelite, when his veins were filled with the poison of the serpent, and his soul defiled with the poison of sin. When utterly unable to help himself, the free mercy of God provided a remedy; and the poor sinner, whose body was in danger of death, and whose soul was in danger of everlasting punishment for his rebellion against God, had only to look at this serpent lifted up, and he was immediately healed. Christ here declared, that what the brazen serpent was to the wounded Israelite, He is to the perishing sinner, who feels that he is guilty before God.

This doctrine was so new and strange to me, that, instead of at once perceiving it was just such a remedy I needed, and intreating God to show me if all this were indeed true, I became more agitated and distressed; and feared that if I continued to read this book, I should be led away from the religion of my fathers. I therefore resolved to lay the New Testament aside, and devote myself to the study of Moses and the Prophets, and the Psalms. I felt that I had never hitherto

studied the Bible with a desire to know what God therein taught me as an individual ; to learn what He would have me think, and feel, and do. I had only read it with the explanations of the different commentators ; and whatever they said respecting it, I took for granted to be the truth. But I now felt that this implicit confidence in man, in a matter of such infinite importance as that of knowing what God requires of me, is hazardous and unwise ; and I felt how misplaced such confidence was in the present case, when I remembered how frequently these commentators differ from each other. The revealed word of God was not meant to be kept as a hidden mystery, but was given to all Israel ; that every individual might learn from it that which concerns his eternal welfare. I therefore began to study the Bible with views and feelings very different from any I had experienced before.

I now viewed the Scriptures, not as a record of historical events, nor as the authoritative standard of Jewish law and theology, but as a portion of the mind of God, which He has graciously revealed for my instruction,—a

revelation of His will, with which He sees it good I should be acquainted. When I read the account of the creation of man and of the earth, the question that arose in my mind, was: "Why has God revealed these facts; and what does He wish me to learn from them?" The eternal God, infinitely holy, and happy in His own perfection, saw good to create a race of beings who might participate in His holiness and happiness. He created man in His own image and likeness, crowned him with glory and honour, and made him have dominion over the creation. When I thought of the unclouded happiness of the first man,—his unobstructed communion with God, his knowledge, his power, his full enjoyment of all the blessings with which a loving Father had surrounded him, I began to enquire, "Why am I unhappy? Why do misery and wretchedness abound in that creation which God at first pronounced 'very good'?" The answer to this question was not far off; the third chapter of Genesis revealed the mystery. With what earnestness and solemnity of feeling did I now read a portion of Scripture, the words of which had been familiar to

me from childhood, but the real purport of which I had never before understood ! I had formerly regarded it as an allegory, or mystic description of events that related solely to Adam and Eve, with which I, as one of their descendants, had no personal connection. But I now perceived it to be a narration of the way in which "sin entered into the world, and death by sin," (Rom. v. 12) an explanation of the problem, why the creation now "groaneth and travaileth in pain." The subtle enemy of man succeeded in his attempt to instil into the minds of our first parents a doubt of the love of God towards them : "Ye shall not surely die : " this is not the reason of the prohibition ; it is "because God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. iii. 4. 5.) Unbelief in the love of God was the cause of the fall of man ; had Adam and Eve believed that God loved them, they would have felt assured that all His commands were imposed for their own good ; but, doubting this, their hearts became alienated from Him, and they were ready to act in opposition to His will. The outward act of diso-

bedience was but the manifestation of an altered state of inward affection towards God.

The fatal deed was done, the rebellious will of man declared to the living God that it spurned His control; and forthwith misery and confusion entered into the fair creation. Could all the delights of Eden now render them happy? Ah! no. Was the presence of God now a source of joy to them? "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden." (Gen. iii. 8.) And thus have their posterity done ever since. The thought of a Being of infinite power, in whose hands our destiny is,—who "knoweth our sitting down, and our rising up, who understandeth our thoughts afar off," (Psalm cxxxix. 2,) has ever been a source of dread to fallen man. The vain pursuit of earthly pleasures, by banishing the thought of this unseen power, serves to "hide" him, for a time, from this unwelcome presence; but when the conscience is fairly aroused, when he feels that he has been madly living in opposition to the will of a power that

could at any moment crush him into dust, every attempt to hide himself from this awful presence is vain : " Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there : if I say, surely the darkness shall cover me ; even the night shall be light about me." (Psalm cxxxix. 7, 8, 11).

I felt that my own condition was precisely that of Adam and Eve, when they sought to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord ; I was in a state of alienation from the Being by whose mighty influence I was ever surrounded ; and I felt that they and I needed one and the same remedy,—even perfect reconciliation with this omnipotent and omnipresent Being, " the great, the mighty, the terrible God."

I was much struck with the circumstantial manner in which God has seen fit to detail what He said to the serpent, to the woman, and to the man. When I considered how completely every word pronounced against the man and woman has been fulfilled, I thought it certain that every word spoken to the ser-

pent must have as full an accomplishment; and that as surely as the word of the living God is true, so surely shall the "Seed of the woman," — shall some descendant of the woman, — "bruise the head" of Satan; that is, shall undo the evil which he has wrought in the creation of God.

The question that then naturally occurred, was: What must this seed of the woman do, in order to restore man to the state of happiness which he lost by the fall? And the obvious answer was: He must bring back the alienated heart of man again to rest its affections on God as the supreme good: He must so exhibit the love of God to man, as to draw forth man's love in return. And the love he must now reveal is love of a higher kind than that of mere complacency in a holy being, such as we may suppose God to have felt towards unfallen man; it must be a love that can, with consistency to the perfect holiness of God, be extended towards guilty and rebellious creatures. But here a difficulty arose: If this seed of the woman be merely one of the fallen race to whom this new revelation of love is to be made, if he is one of the alienated and

rebellious sinners, how is he first to be raised out of this state ; where, and how, is he to acquire a knowledge of this forgiving love of God ? Must he not be an intermediate person ? a מוֹכִיחַ, an umpire, who can lay his hands upon both ? (Job. ix. 33.)

It was impossible to conceal from myself that I was involuntarily portraying the character which Jesus of Nazareth assumed to himself. In spite of my struggles against them, these convictions irresistibly forced themselves upon me : Man is a fallen creature ; his heart is by nature alienated from God ; he cannot recover himself from this state of alienation ; the promised seed of the woman must be a mediator between God and man ; he must partake of the nature of both, and yet he must not partake of the sin of man ; and how can all this be, except by—I shrunk from adding—the incarnation of Deity in man ; for I saw at a glance where this admission would land me.

Though I had thrown aside the New Testament, I could not get rid of the light I had acquired from it. It seemed to shed a radiance on every line of the Pentateuch, which I

was now studying ; making that clear which was before dark and mysterious ; giving order and consistency to what had formerly appeared arbitrary and unconnected. It cannot be denied that the explanations of modern Judaism in regard to the sacrifices are far from satisfactory. Long before their appointment as a portion of the Jewish economy, even from the days of Abel downwards, they formed the chief part of outward worship. Why did a God of mercy command His creatures to imbrue their hands in the blood of an innocent animal ? Why, under the law, were these sacrifices multiplied ; and why was the sprinkling of blood a means of purification ? Man, as a guilty sinner, is obnoxious to death ; in taking the life of the animal brought in sacrifice, he confesses this, saying : “ Lord ! my life is forfeited by sin ; but thou art graciously pleased to accept the penalty in the person of another : ” כִּידּוּם הוּא בִנְפֶשׁ יִכְפֹּר “ It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.” (Levit. xvii. 11.) Yet surely the blood of bulls and goats could not do this, unless it was connected with something of a higher and spiritual character ! I was forced to confess that the view taken by

Christians of the design and meaning of sacrifices is at least consistent and plausible; and more suited to the prominent part they held in the ancient Jewish religion, than the vague notions of modern Jews on the subject. I remembered the confused idea of some connection subsisting between sin and sacrifice, which I had formerly entertained; as, for example, when we say on the day of atonement: "Let it be willed before thee, O Lord, our God, and the God of our fathers, to forgive us all our sins, and pardon us all our iniquities, and grant us remission for all our transgressions:—For the sins for which it is our duty to bring the burnt offering: And for our sins for which it is our duty to bring the sin-offering, &c." What were these offerings to do for Israel, or to teach them? Whatsoever benefit accrued from them when offered, are we not now deprived of that benefit? In the days of old, the high priest confessed the sins of the children of Israel, וָטָח אֹתָם עַל־רֹאשׁ הַשֹּׁעִיר, "and put them on the head of the goat," which carried them away into the wilderness; (Levit. xvi. 21, 22) but who carries away our sins now?

These, and many other reflections, were suggested to my mind, by the Christian doctrine that the sacrifices were typical of the work of the Messiah; and I felt disposed, with a more definite meaning than I had hitherto attached to it, to adopt the petition in our service for the day of atonement: **דַּקֵּם לָנוּ מַלְיָץ יוֹשֵׁר רַחֲמִים לְשׁוֹבְבִים מִצָּרָי כּוֹפֵר**
 "Raise up for us an upright advocate; and cause the backsliders to hear: 'I have found a ransom.'"

After some time spent in the diligent study of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, it occurred to me that my abandoning the study of the New Testament was very unreasonable. "Why should I hesitate to read it?" I asked myself. "If I am sure it is false, it can do me no harm; and if I am not sure it is false, is it not my duty diligently to examine if it be true?" I reflected that Jesus of Nazareth came to Jews, to people who must have had the same difficulties and the same prejudices as myself; so I resolved to give the question of the truth of Christianity a fair and a patient investigation.

On returning to the perusal of the New

Testament, I was much struck with the truthfulness of the whole narrative. The mistakes and unbelief of the disciples, the success or the failure of their mission, the numbers who believed their report, or the numbers who rejected it, all appear to be faithfully recorded as they occurred, without any calculation of expediency, any thought of making out a good case. Jesus of Nazareth appeared to me to have said and done exactly those things which an impostor would not say and do. Austerities which men may admire and wonder at, have been common in all false religions; the denial of sense being compensated by the gratification of pride; but a self-denial that was to be known only to Him "that seeth in secret," was a device as little calculated to gain followers as could well be imagined. "Who-soever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Mark viii. 34.) "When ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto

thy Father which is in secret ; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt. vi. 16—18.) Not one promise did He make to His disciple that was gratifying to the carnal desires of man ; poverty, contempt, tribulation, this was the inheritance promised them in this world : " If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me, before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you ; if they have kept my saying, they will keep your's also." (John xv. 18—20.) Nothing, surely, but an overpowering conviction that this was the true Messiah, sent of God, could have induced men to follow a leader who held out prospects so little inviting.

The Acts of the Apostles, which I now read for the first time, interested me powerfully. The resurrection of Christ, His ascension into heaven, and the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost conferred on the apostles, occupied my

attention for a considerable time. I found the difficulties involved in supposing them to be false were much greater than the difficulty of believing the events as stated. In regard to the resurrection of Jesus, for example, the apostles and other disciples who profess to have seen Him, could not be deceived ; the only other hypothesis is, that after having discovered Jesus to be an impostor, by his not rising from the dead, as he declared he would do, they had agreed among themselves to continue and promulgate the imposture, by announcing the same unattractive doctrines, and inculcating the same self-denying precepts. Then as regards the miraculous powers of the apostles, there is no middle line between truth and deception ; fanaticism may do much, but it cannot raise the dead. After a strict and careful examination, I came to the conclusion, that these wonderful narratives are as well established as any history in the Old Testament.

The account of the conversion and subsequent conduct of Saul of Tarsus, gave me more insight into the true nature of Christianity than anything I had previously read. Here

was a man, honestly zealous for the law, filled with indignation against those who he thought were seeking to subvert it. "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; which thing I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." (Acts xxvi. 9—11.) This man became convinced that Jesus whom he persecuted, was indeed the hope of Israel, the Saviour of the world; and what a change took place in him! From being the zealous Pharisee, admired by the priests and rulers of the day, he became the despised Nazarene, branded by his former friends as "a pestilent fellow," and a "mover of sedition." "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him; not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith.

of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phill. iii. 7—9.)

As I came to understand the doctrines of Christianity more clearly, I was struck with the super-human wisdom of the epistles. Such a deep insight into the evils of the human heart; such an ample exposition of the remedies for these evils; and yet such a distinct recognition of man's natural aversion to the remedies, and incompetence to overcome this aversion by his own unassisted efforts. It is easy to perceive the beauty of a character habitually influenced by self-denial, humility, and a constant sense of the presence of God, and the reality of eternal truths; but how distasteful to man's carnal nature, is the personal exercise of these virtues! That my neighbour should be humble, and self-denied, and indifferent to worldly riches and honours, I can highly approve; but to be told that I must be all these, is "a hard saying." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father

but is of the world." (1 John ii. 15, 16.) When we feel how consonant to our natural desires are all these things we are thus forbidden to love, we might naturally suppose it is impossible to obey this command. But Paul tells us how this difficulty is overcome; the love of things seen and temporal is cast out by a higher love: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 14, 15, 17.)

Were I to relate the impressions made on me by the various portions of the gospels and epistles, it would rather be a commentary on the New Testament, than a statement made to my brethren according to the flesh, of the way in which God led me to believe in Jesus of Nazareth. The more I examined into the truth of Christianity, the more did the question appear to be narrowed into a small compass: Jesus of Nazareth was either the promised

Messiah, or an impostor and deceiver. The New Testament is either a revelation from God, or an invention of lying and wicked men. After mature deliberation, I was forced to come to the conclusion that Jesus is the Messiah, and that the New Testament is, equally with the Old, the word of God.

But this conviction, so far from bringing peace with it, seemed at first to increase the trouble of my soul tenfold. All the hatred and prejudice with which I had been accustomed to view Christianity, instead of being subdued, were rekindled in full vigour; and my heart shrunk with aversion from that which my understanding was fully convinced was true. I will not dwell long on my state of mind at this period; those who have experienced it need not to be told its anguish; and to those who have not, the account would be unintelligible. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?" "The heart knoweth its own bitterness."

One day I cast myself upon the ground and wept bitterly before the Lord, entreating Him to give me peace. I besought Him that He would give me to feel what Paul experienced

when he said ; “ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 1.) Long did I continue my supplication; remembering that Elijah, when on Carmel, sent seven times before he received the answer to his prayer ;— but still no peace came. Suddenly these words of Jesus came into my mind : “ Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name,” (John xvi. 24.) I cannot describe the reluctance I felt to pray in the name of Jesus ; and yet I saw how inconsistent was this reluctance, with the belief that He is the Saviour of the world. The struggle of that moment can never be forgotten. At length I was enabled to cry out : “ Lord, I believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Redeemer, and King of Israel, who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities ; for His sake have mercy upon me and give me peace.” No sooner had I offered this prayer than my burden was removed ; the peace of God that passeth all understanding entered into my soul ; I felt that I was redeemed from destruction, that God loved me, that Christ had died for me, and washed me from all my sins in His own blood ; that guilty and sinful as I was by nature,

I was now "justified freely by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 24.)

I am well aware how much of enthusiasm and folly may appear in this ; not only to Jews, but to those who, while professing themselves to be Christians, have never yet seen the necessity of a radical change in the heart and affections, which must take place in every man before he can become a child of God. But the mode in which this change is spoken of in Scripture, — being "born again," — becoming "a new creature," surely implies something much more than an increased attention to the performance of outward worship, and the duties of social life. And I would solemnly and earnestly entreat all who may read this, whether Jew or Gentile, to examine diligently whether these things be so ; whether it indeed be true, that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.)

The enjoyment of inward peace was soon followed by outward trial and affliction. I felt it right to inform my beloved relations of the change that had taken place in me. Those whose affections cling round their home, and

who fondly remember the protectors of their early years, may conceive my feelings on receiving the reply to my communication, of which the following is an extract :

“Thou wicked one, may thy name be blotted out ; thou hast united thyself with the assembly of the wicked. Thy father and grandfather, with all thy relations, will go together to the grave of thy sainted mother, and announce to her the sad tidings. Cursed be the day wherein thou, wicked one, seed of the serpent, wast born. Woe is me, for the Lord has afflicted me. Thy name shall henceforth be blotted out, and no more named by us ; and may the hottest judgments of the Almighty fall upon thee, because thou hast forsaken the God of Israel, and joined thyself to idols.”

This was indeed bitter ; but it was part of the promised inheritance. “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” I could, from my heart, bless them who thus cursed me, and pray for them who thus despitefully used me.

Many years have elapsed since the change took place, of which I have thus endeavoured to give an account ; and during all the time I can testify that “goodness and mercy have

followed me." The truth that at first brought peace has day by day become more precious to me. Like my brother Paul, I can say : " I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth ; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek " (Rom. i. 16.)

R. H. H.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. II.

A. D. S.

IN due and perfect appreciation, "through the light which has, by the grace of God, visited me from on high," of the inspired words of the Apostle Paul, I would commence this narration by reminding my readers that none can confess that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost. This is, indeed, also a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, not only to the Jew, surrounded as he is by stumbling blocks, together with the adverse circumstances of his education ; but also to the Gentile Christian, however stimulated by example, through immediate connection with the Christian life, as well as from his earliest infancy being taught to reverence that blessed and honored name, so oppositely regarded by the Jew. We hear, continually, exclamations of wonder at the Jew's unbelief, but if we do

indeed contemplate spiritual things with carnal understandings, how much more is it a matter of astonishment, in one from his infancy possessing the direct advantages of example, and education derived from excellent Christian parents, who esteem it not only a paramount duty to God, but in affectionate solicitude for the welfare of their children, endeavour by every means to inculcate that faith so necessary to present and future happiness. Is it not then more surprising that these exertions, exercised from duty, as well as parental love, should not always be blessed? To whom then is the arm of the Lord revealed? Let God reply for himself. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." The Son then is the only channel of communication, without him, there is neither access to, nor conception of, our God.

It is a blessed thing that, under the new dispensation, there is no exclusion at all; that the invitation is to every one that thirsteth (would to God that the thirst was as general

as the invitation); it is indispensable that a thirst should be felt, before the comfortable provision can be appropriated; many may pretend to drink from the living waters, but it is impossible they can know how welcome, how all-satisfying the antidote is, who have not really experienced the want of it; if the thirst once exist, we know that the Lord is faithful to satiate the hungry soul;—but how to convince those who, in the emphatic language of Scripture, are termed blind, deaf, snared in holes, hid in prison houses? Can words give a more accurate idea of utter helplessness, more powerfully express human incapability of affording relief? It is our happiness to know that although there is a diversity of operations, there is but one spirit, and that spirit is not straitened; that it is boundless and inscrutable in all its ways and means. When a Christian congratulates a new convert, the almost immediate inquiry is—how did the Lord make himself known unto you?—with an eagerness, as it were a natural expectation, next to certainty, to hear more of the innumerable dealings of Him who promised to lead the blind by a way which they knew not.

I will now conclude the remarks with which I have prefaced this narration, by observing that I have not thought proper to enter into any family matters. Suffice it to say, that my father, being high in estimation among the Israelites, he cannot but look on a son becoming a Christian, as a bitter disgrace; and I, understanding the feelings of my family (for I have experienced them), am not surprised that they regard my brother abroad (whom the Lord, in His mercy, has also chosen) and myself, as perfectly insane upon this subject. Persecuted or not, when the call comes to a child of Abraham, from many causes its effects are the same as in the case of our illustrious ancestor; we are called to come away from our kindred, and from our father's house, to evince an implicit and full confidence in Him who has called and promised the blessing. And while I do not upbraid my brethren for their feelings towards us who have embraced Christianity, neither is it my intention to ridicule those observances practised by the Jews; the most of which being ordered by the books of Moses, it is not surprising that they are viewed with extreme reverence and affection

by my brethren ; and as they still are by them considered to be pleasing in the sight of God, they should be sacred from ridicule.

At a very early age, my brothers and myself were instructed in the Hebrew language, and the history of our nation, by a Rabbi, who, for that purpose, attended my father's house. I engaged in these exercises with my whole heart ; I remember one imperative injunction of our master, viz.—never even to mention the name of Jesus Christ ; that as often as we did so, it would be a sin against God. Having received this injunction from one whom I regarded with respect and affection, and whom I naturally confided in as perfect in the law, it was many years after ere I could, without remorse and fear, utter the forbidden name. I was not more attracted to it, when I heard myself derided and reproached as being a Jew by my boyish companions ; and not by them alone, but frequently even by grown persons, called Christians. I reflected then that it was necessary we should bear the curse incurred by our forefathers, and predicted by Moses. (Allow me here to state, that the Jews generally believe that the sins of the fathers are visited

on the children.) It was, at the same time, always most pleasing and consoling to reflect that as the Lord, in his wrath, according to his word, had scattered us throughout the world, and we had become a by-word, a proverb, and a reproach, in like manner, of His mercy, He will fulfil all His gracious promises concerning His ancient people, profusely spread throughout the Old Testament:—"Thus saith the Lord; if heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel *for all that they have done*, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 37.)

My aversion to Christianity increased with my age and education. As I became the more acquainted with the several histories of the nations, I beheld in all, accounts of the most horrible massacres of my brethren, together with bitter persecution; and saw more than sufficient of the latter remaining at the present day to remind us but too faithfully of the harrowing truth of the former. What book of history can you open, and not see recorded there the most fiendish atrocities committed on those, whom, although they have so bitterly

sinned against God,—what can man lay to their charge? How gross, how devilish, these persecutions necessarily appear to the Jews, when they reflect that they were wholly unprovoked! How must Christianity have appeared to them when they saw His banner, with many an idolatrous emblem, uplifted in one hand, while the sword of slaughter was swayed in the other, by its professed and boasted advocates! Their religion was the slanderous and impious plea for the robbery and murder of the Jews. When I reflected on these things, need I say that I viewed the New Testament with such horror and disgust, as destroyed any appetite I might have had from curiosity to peruse it. No one could make me believe that ever a Jew could sincerely embrace Christianity; that the basest could be guilty of such unpardonable wickedness, of such impious ingratitude to the God of our fathers, who had preserved us through all our misery and wanderings. I should have thought it much more possible for me to fly through the air, than that I should ever become a Christian; and I should have unhesitatingly chosen the most torturing death as the alternative.

I often think how gradually, almost imperceptibly, I was led to Christ, and how He suits His way of revealing Himself to our several diversified situations and conditions. How wonderful must have been the transition from darkness to instantaneous light that occurred to Paul! How overwhelming the discovery, that He, for whose persecution he was completely armed, and on his way to prosecute, was Christ the Lord! The sudden discovery would have proved too much, if he had not, at the same time, been wonderfully supported by that love which was manifested towards himself. Every conversion is wonderful — miraculous; but they are frequently brought about by a variety of, humanly-speaking, insignificant causes, till the light comes as vividly and effectually as it did at once to Paul. I was residing at Greenwich about the commencement of the year 1842. The last Sunday of my stay I was prevailed on to accompany some friends to church. For the first time I heard a portion of the New Testament read; the 6th chapter of the Book of Matthew was one of the morning lessons. It was with extreme admiration and surprise, not to say uneasiness, that I intently

listened to this continuation of our Lord's sermon on the mount. I was touched with the love that manifestly breathed through every sentence,—the just censure of hypocrites,—the necessary caution,—but my heart thrilled at the simple but eloquent appeal to our senses, respecting the goodness and care of God towards his smallest creatures, and how much we should confide to His continual watchfulness. I was indeed astonished at the simplicity, beauty, and comfort of the passage; so replete with zeal to God, and with love to man. I cannot say I was then converted, but what I heard had taken such hold of me, I could not rest till I read more of this novel and beautiful doctrine. My soul seemed to relish it, and to desire ~~a more~~ copious draught; besides, I could but imperfectly remember that which I had heard but for the first time. I longed to read that chapter; and I think, shortly after, when I got possession of a New Testament, it was the first portion to which I referred. I need scarcely say with what eagerness I *devoured* the contents of this blessed book; these "new things" declared to us, and promised by Jehovah to our fathers. I anxiously searched

and compared different passages of Scripture, till, in a very short time, in the solitude of my chamber, I was mourning over Him who was wounded for my transgressions, who was bruised for my iniquities. I wept when I considered, if there was any sorrow like unto His sorrow,—His humiliation,—His patient suffering amid all His numerous and diversified trials,—His life's mournful history of unexampled pain and anguish,—His death of torture. His rod had now smitten the heart of rock, and, if I may be permitted to use such a figure, living waters gushed from my eyes, in which I was baptized. I have been asked to describe how I felt my need of a Saviour. It has been urged that it is necessary "we should feel lost before we can be *found*;" but I never felt I had need of a Saviour till I found Him. I cannot point out any particular passage that was the means of revealing Him. His ways are unsearchable and past finding out. When I attempt to describe the feelings I experienced, I perceive the impossibility of expressing that which is indeed *unspeakable*. When the Lord Jesus first appeared to me, He did not tell me "I was lost," but that I was found; and I can well remember

my tumultuous feelings at perceiving my miraculous preservation,—my gratitude to Him who had rescued me. It appeared to me then, that I was on safe ground; but oh! how great, how terrible, the danger I had escaped! My heart and soul were lifted up to my Redeemer, who pointed to His wounds as the tremendous price He paid for my ransom.

There were several things in the New Testament that I could not, at the time, comprehend. I knew nothing, had heard nothing, of commentaries; but I remembered that "Counsellor" was one of the names by which our Messiah was to be called; I therefore prayed to the God of my fathers, that for the sake of Him, the perfect one, he would guide and counsel me in my perplexity; "Lord! I believe, help thou my unbelief," was the spirit of my prayer. Picture me then alone, although in the midst of multitudes (for I was, at that time, perfectly solitary, there was none to whom I could or would confide the peculiar circumstances of my situation); picture me with the pages of this hitherto "sealed book" open before me; consider that, from that day to this, the light that had shone upon part, was gradually diffused

over the whole,—that I have had frequent occasion for the solution of difficult passages, but I implicitly confided in Him whose hand alone had led me out of darkness. I looked up infinitely above man for instruction,—I mistrusted, I regarded with the greatest suspicion, the opinions of my fellow-men, that were so strangely discordant, as appeared in the great diversity of sects; I was aware of my extreme fallibility, my urgent need of advice; but I remembered too, the gracious invitation of our blessed Saviour, warmly registered in my heart, “Take my yoke upon you, and *learn of ME*; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Consider all this, then try and conceive the gratitude I owe to the Lord who heard and so effectually answered my prayer. I have tested, experienced, and can fully testify to, the faithfulness of Isaiah’s encouraging words, “God will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”

Shortly after my conversion, I was anxious to attend a place of worship, and accordingly went to a chapel of ease, near where I was residing. I prepared my mind that I was going where our Lord would specially be in the midst. After the prayers and lessons were finished, I heard an impressive and eloquent discourse. It appeared (and if any but God had previously known my intention of visiting that chapel, I should have imagined it designed) expressly an address to me; the text was 2 Cor. v. 17. "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The next Lord's day I was astonished with another extraordinary text, for the subject of the morning's discourse, and so applicable to my position. Zech. xii. pt. of the 10th v. "And they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for an only son." Conceive my extreme astonishment at hearing this remarkable passage, for let me here state distinctly, I had no recollection of ever meeting with it before. One of the many hindrances to the conversion of the Jews is, I am convinced, owing to the prayers and

Scriptures being read in the Hebrew language, and so very few of them understanding it sufficiently to be their own translators, are either imposed upon by an entire perversion of the sacred pages, or they unhesitatingly submit the many parts that are incomprehensible to the judgment of the Rabbis. "For the Lord hath poured out upon them the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed their eyes: the prophets and their rulers; the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto them as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this I pray thee:—and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed; and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this I pray thee,—and he saith, I am not learned." (Isaiah xxix. 10—12.) Again, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." (Amos viii. 11, 12.) I must not dwell upon the particulars of my journeying; let me but briefly state that my way has been through many obstacles, and through

many temptations. I have had to encounter the sneer from some, the curse from others; there has been the advice with threatenings, and also the insinuating counsel clothed in apparent love, much more requiring caution of my fellow-men. I have had much experience of my great weakness, of my deceitful heart, and amid all, through all, with constant and confiding affection I have clung to the strength of the Lord my God. Leave me not for a moment, O my Father! has been my continual prayer.

With respect to the many and different sects, I regarded them all with the greatest suspicion, naturally imagining that they could not be all right, and very possibly might be all wrong. What was I to do? I was impelled by duty and affection to confess the Lord Jesus, in every possible way before men. Whom was I to join? The Churchmen vehemently railed against the Dissenters, and the Dissenters railed against the Churchmen; I had neither curiosity nor inclination to enquire into that, which I satisfied myself, could be but a frivolous contention; and of a militant, or fighting church of Christ, save against spiritual foes, I had no conception. I recollected how

these very dissensions once confirmed me as to the truth of the Jewish faith; I again reflected on the increased stumbling-blocks in the way of my brethren, caused by these dissensions. I determined to join no party; my heart was open to the Lord, and with His help, would display my faith in Christ by my life; make it the theme, as far as possible, of every conversation, and would lose no opportunity to confess the Lord Jesus Christ before all men. Subsequently I have anxiously considered whether I was not, by keeping aloof, increasing the very evil I was deprecating; by separating from all, I stood condemned of the charge that I myself preferred against others, and therefore determined at length to join myself to a Christian church; the more readily too, as I thought, through the medium of many circumstances, I could trace the hand of my heavenly Father that had guided me through so many difficulties, pointing out to my observation that which is most conformable to His word.

Although my opinions may not exactly coincide with others on unimportant points, I need scarcely say, that I love *all* who love

our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; and by His love shed abroad in my heart I deeply commiserate, and am unceasingly anxious for those who still remain outcasts from the kingdom of our glorious Messiah.

The longer I am acquainted with Christianity, the more I contemplate its manifold beauties, the more I am constrained to love Him who brought me within the pale of its hallowed influence. How often do I desire the goodness of the Lord to pass before me! Surely he has magnified His name above all his word.

That blessed truth, "God is love," a Christian only can understand, and that imperfectly; it is but dimly discernible to those who have not looked on its bright and glorious appearance in the face of God's anointed. The great love of our God is manifest, in giving us all things richly to enjoy, in opening His hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing. In framing this beautiful world for man, in rendering it productive of all things necessary for his existence, and in adding so many others for his comfort, how poor our gratitude for all these and other innumerable blessings! But

when we turn to that highest, that most wonderful expression, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," all other mercies shrink into nothingness beside the unspeakable gift. This is the greatest mystery of all—"God manifest in the flesh," in our nature, a relationship that places us infinitely above angels; for "unto which of the angels saith he at any time, thou art my son." "Behold what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God;" and faith that worketh by love, can lay her hand upon this exalted privilege, and call this sure and certain hope her own.

Now, instead of looking on Christianity as idolatry, I discover that it is only a Christian who can know God; that it is only through Christ we can truly behold him. "This is life eternal, to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent." By the new and living way I behold more clearly the infinite magnitude of His greatness, the incomprehensibility of His being, the immaculate purity of His character, and His long-suffering good-

ness; I am enabled more fully to comprehend, and to join with my whole heart, the song to His praise; "He remembered us in our low estate, because His mercy endureth for ever." At the same time I perceive the extreme sinfulness of sin, which required such a tremendous sacrifice for its expiation; and while the forest of Lebanon, and all the beasts thereof, could not be sufficient to atone for, or cleanse from, its guilt, God "provided himself with a lamb for a burnt-offering," which not only obtains eternal redemption for us, but also brings in everlasting righteousness. "The Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," is also "the Lord our righteousness;" oh! blessed, for ever blessed, is the way in which righteousness and peace thus embrace each other, where mercy and truth meet together.

Christ has revealed himself to my soul as the author and the messenger of the new and better covenant, established on better promises, "ordered in all things, and sure." If I am cast down on account of former awful iniquity, He comforts me with the assurance that "His blood cleanseth from *all* sin;" if I mourn over

remaining corruption, His blessed and cheering word bids me "Fear not, for *His* righteousness shall sustain me." If I reflect on the wondrous attributes of His inconceivable perfection, and my unworthiness, my insignificance, my languid love, my feeble prayers, again He reminds me that we know not how to address Him, or what to pray for, as we ought, but the Spirit witnesseth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us. When I listen to the doctrine, delivered in the name and power of God, from the mouth of Him to whom Moses desired us to hearken; when I hear my ruined condition so faithfully exposed by Him, I am constrained to exclaim, Lord! to whom shall I go? *Thou* hast the words of eternal life. Who else can deliver from the curse that cleaveth to every one "that confirmeth not all the words of the law to do them"? (Deut. xxvii. 26.) Shall we not implicitly confide in him, who is a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest? (Isa. xxxii. 2.) Apart from the divinely appointed means, where can we find shelter? And oh! how necessary is it, that we should

obtain refuge ere it is too late. It is no light thing.—*It is our life!*

The wrath of God's fiery indignation will be the storm, the pains of hell will be the tempest. But before God appears either in the one or the other, let us hearken to him in the still small voice, in the love-breathed advice; "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." (Ps. ii.)

My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved, and that Jerusalem, "which has drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury, which has drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out," may be bidden, with the constraining power of Jerusalem's king, to arise and shine; when *Judah's* harp, taken down from the willows, and attuned to the new song of Moses and the Lamb, shall, in swelling strains of harmonious melody, conspicuously and loudly accompany the increasing shouts and songs of praise to "the lion of their tribe, —to Israel's glory."

Oh! may he, "whom the people despised, whom the nation abhorred," be speedily universally hailed Lord of all, the only Prince and Saviour to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.

A. D. S.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. III.

A. E.

“The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.” (Psa. xxvii. 1—3.) “I trusted in thee, O Lord : I said, Thou art my God.” (Psa. xxxi. 14.) Yes, this be our motto! Enmity and opposition of every sort may await us; sorrow and grief may befall us; but if God be *our* God, what does it matter? “Thou art *my* God!” Oh blessed word, essence of the Gospel—of the joyful message of salvation which has gone out to all lands! We, who before were captives to sin, are now free; we, who before lived in enmity with God, are now His children. The gulf which separated us from ~~Him~~ *is* filled up; the veil which was

between us and the Holiest of all, *is* rent, the Saviour *is* come, and thou Jehovah, *art my* God! For unto *us* is born this day a Saviour. So do we sing in joyful remembrance of the day of our new birth. And how should we be elevated above all temporal and earthly trouble and pain, did we consider that God not only so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son for it, but that He has taken us out from amongst the thousands of our brethren, and drawn us by the force of His love,—attracted us by the light of his grace, that we should show forth His praises, who has thus called us out of darkness.

The world may scorn us, our brethren distrust us, and what is more trying than either, but few, very few, in the church of Christ, may stretch out the hand of welcome to us; yet, if God be our God, we murmur not, we fear not; we are filled with joy and peace in believing. In ourselves we are weak; but in the Lord Jehovah we have righteousness and strength: even in the midst of trials our joy abounds; and if all on earth is cold and cloudy, we can in spirit retire into a region of unclouded sunshine and perpetual spring.

“And wherefore all this joy?” Askest thou, my brother of the house of Israel; for to thee do I address these lines: “if by any means I may provoke to emulation them that are my flesh, and may save some of them.” (Rom. xi. 14.) Ask the man to whom his righteous sentence of death has been read,—who now waits in his dungeon, expecting from hour to hour that this sentence will be put in execution,—when lo! his prison bars are opened, a free pardon is presented to him, and he goes forth from his darksome cell to the green and smiling earth;—ask him wherefore he is joyful! Such a deliverance has been ours, and shall we not rejoice? Between eternal condemnation and eternal happiness there is a mere bridge, a narrow way, and that way is Christ Jesus. If the following brief notice of my life shall convince even one of my brethren of this truth, I shall be more than recompensed for the disagreeable feelings that accompany the public avowal of that secret experience of the soul, that we feel to be most sacred.

Born of wealthy parents, I passed my childhood joyfully, unconscious of the sinfulness

within me. From my earliest age, all my attention was directed towards study, which I loved above everything; and the greatest punishment my parents and teachers could inflict on me, was a threat that I should become a merchant. In looking back on this period, however, I can scarcely remember an evening when I went to sleep without having prayed in my heart, and poured out before God, all my little joys and sorrows. I remember, that I often left my playfellows, in order to come to God; and the contempt which I had to endure on that account, made me only come more frequently. Even much later, at the age of twelve years, I rose during the night, for prayer, moved by a feeling I cannot describe; I was often bathed in tears, but I rose again from my knees without being comforted. At an early age I entered the Gymnasium, where, among all the Jewish students I was the only one to whom the prizes were allotted during four years. At that time, I also diligently studied the Bible; and my thoughts, when I read the prophecies of Isaiah, were, that the times of the Messiah would be those, when the Christians would return from their

idolatry, to the *one* God, whom the Jews adore. Against Christianity itself I was very inimical, seeking every occasion to oppose it; and attacking, with violent disputes, every person I could. Previous to this period, even before I was ten years old, all those arguments, which I now hear so often objected against Christianity, by grown up persons, had occurred to myself; such as, that if God thought that Christianity was necessary, all men would have been born Christians; and how *three* could be *one*, &c. I was very fond of reading the Psalms, and continued till my thirteenth year to be a modern Jew, or a pious Deist, who, besides his deism, has still some remnants of Jewish ceremonies. This was the period, when, as I expressed it at that time, I became *conscious of myself*; or, as I now say, the old Adam awakened within me in all the pride of knowledge. Philosophy, and rhetoric, poetry, and the belles-lettres, were to me a kind of second Minerva,—the very goddess of wisdom, whom I worshipped. From the time I entered my philosophical curriculum, I became in fact a Pantheist, and was a great admirer of Greek mythology; the only dif-

ference between my religion and theirs being, that they personified single manifestations of the universal Godhead, which I did not. As to my sins, according to the Pantheistic theory, I derived them from the matter connected with God in me; and I thus understood why the Greeks had represented their Gods, as sinning like themselves. In fact, nothing was sin in my estimation; nothing was, in reality, *objective* at all; everything became *subjective*; and this concrete subject, in one word, the idol *self*, became the object of my heart's adoration. One thing did not suit my system, and that was the idea of eternity. That was evidently to the human mind inconceivable; and how then could such a thing exist? And whence was matter? When, the first thing, even granted that men arose by development of nature? and there we come again back upon eternity. Why not even now such a development? These questions puzzled me so much that I sometimes returned to my old deism, seeking light in prayer; but rose unanswered with as heavy a heart as I had knelt down. This also serves to explain my continued observance of the Jewish festivals.

About this time, I was, through a sudden change of circumstances, thrown alone and unfriended into the wide world; and amid the stern realities of life, many of my poetic fancies left me. By a striking leading of providence, I became acquainted with those Christians who afterwards became my fathers in the Lord. I at first avoided their company; but in a short time, I was obliged, through a wonderful concurrence of circumstances, to spend two hours daily with them. My prejudices were soon removed, and we became very intimate friends; and I could not help greatly admiring in them the holy life manifested as the result of Christian principles. My conscience was now awakening, and I wondered, whence this internal judge came? Was it from education? If so, whence again this opposite principle which I found in me, the inclination to do evil rather than good? There were contradictory principles in me; a voice admonishing to follow after righteousness, and an inclination and tendency to sin; which latter I soon perceived to be of a spiritual and not a material origin. I began to understand that the voice *within* me was

as it were the echo of something *without*, and what was that? Was it a universal spirit, as I had been accustomed to call it? But what could a universal spirit be, according to the Pantheistic theory, but a number of single spirits, an aggregate of individual consciences? This view being inadequate to solve the mystery, it must needs be the echo of something objective, of something, though in some degree *within*, still also *out of* and above men—of God, of a personal creating, governing, judging God!

At this time, I had finished my philosophical studies, and passed my examinations, that I might leave the country in order to pursue my education at a university of higher rank. I left ——— accompanied by the anxious prayers of my Christian friends, who saw very well that by my going away, all hope of my final conversion, humanly speaking, was lost; and who could only recommend my soul to the especial care of the great Bishop, Jesus. And their prayers were heard; for when I had arrived in the city, in which I hoped to be provided with means for carrying on my journey, I found myself unexpectedly so desti-

tute of these, and met with so many other discouragements, that for the present I relinquished my plan and returned to my former place of abode. I now entered upon a very hard and trying time as to outward circumstances; and the stern school of poverty brought me more and more away from an ideal region into that of realities. I gave myself with more earnestness than ever to my studies; chiefly because I thought to find in them comfort and consolation for outward pressure and dreary isolation in this world. The more I thought, the more I found how unable I was to think to any good purpose. I saw more and more clearly that my former religious system had proceeded from, and was based upon egotism. I was now brought more and more to perceive, that God and self are not identical, but opposed to each other; for the self in me was in direct contrast and opposition to God. This helped to solve one of the chief objections, which Satan raised in me against the truth of Christianity. For when he saw his kingdom about to perish, he endeavoured with the utmost of his power to win me wholly again, and to make of me,

who internally was persuaded of the immortality of the soul, of a judgment seat, and a judging, holy, just God, a complete Atheist. He presented before my eyes a loving and merciful God ; telling me that such a God could in consistency with His holiness be nothing but a loving and pardoning Father, seeing that anger and hatred, being sinful, could have no place in God. The consequences which can be drawn out of this dogma, it is needless here to state. Suffice it to say, that by-and-by I was enabled to see, that though God could not be *really* angry (this expression being only assumed, because, we men could not find a name for a feeling which is not in our nature), still sin being diametrically opposed to God, who is holiness, the rebel, as a matter of course, must be punished by the eternal law of God. But there I met again with the difficulty, that all men are sinners, and that there is no way of escape for any one from the justice of God to His mercy, seeing that the latter could certainly not over-balance the former ; both attributes subsisting in God in the highest perfection.

In such studies and reflections the winter

had passed, and I had the whole time received Christian instruction ; always listening, never objecting, under the impression that God alone could show me what was truth. Towards the spring, my outward circumstances had very favourably changed, and thus a great obstacle to my conversion was removed ; for I formerly feared that my Jewish brethren would ascribe it to the pressure of temporal necessity. At the same time my health had broken down through hard study and outward privations ; and some of my old and forgotten sins arose in the light of an accusing conscience. How was I to escape the just judgment of God ? What could help me ? Repentance ? This could perhaps amend my future conduct, but it could never atone for past sins. Good deeds ? In performing these, I could only fulfil my duty, and that imperfectly ; and how could I expect thereby to blot out the guilt, which I was heaping up daily ? There I stood, comfortless, without God, without hope in the world. I began to regard the Bible in a new light. I compared it with contemporary books and what a difference did I find ! Who has taught Moses the religion he preached ? Who

sustained him under all his trials? Who had enabled the authors of the Old Testament to give such a true description of the human heart, one so widely differing from that given by the Grecian philosophers, who, in point of science, certainly stood far higher than the Jews? And then, how the open recital of the faults of the men of God, of whom it treats, impresses the stamp of truth on the whole Bible narration! That book cannot be written as all other books are; it must be divinely inspired; its histories and miracles must be true, and God must have revealed himself to my fathers. But then certainly He must have shown them a way of mercy and life eternal. At this state I was much perplexed by the opposing claims of Judaism and Christianity, both of which profess to spring from the same scripture source. But of this I will speak afterwards.

When I was under this great anguish, not knowing where to flee, my conscience testifying against me, I tried to escape from myself; I fled the church which I had till then regularly attended, but how was I to attempt to flee from the Almighty? My anxiety only

increased from day to day. Then it was, that one day, my eye met the gracious and wonderful invitation of God. (Rev. xxii. 17.) "Let him that *heareth*, say, come; and let him *that is athirst* come." O Lord, how thirsting am I, but how, and where shall I come? "And *whosoever* will, let him take the water of life freely." Here then is a fountain of life opened for *every one*! Even for the chiefest of sinners! Even for me! I read the words over and over again; and my heart thrilled within me from a mingled emotion of joy and pain. I was as one thunderstruck. From this moment I date a new era in my life, even the *beginning* of my conversion through the unspeakable grace of God vouchsafed to me the chief of sinners.

The Bible, wherein my eye met with this blessed truth, that "whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely," I have still, and hope to preserve all my life long. Among all the precious passages declaring to fallen men the unspeakable love of God, as revealed in the face of Jesus, the Messiah, this will of course always remain the most precious to me. I showed to my teacher, and father in the

Lord, the passage which had so much struck me; and he used it to enforce more and more upon me, the necessity of immediately accepting of that invitation. But how could I do so, without knowing whether Jesus were really the Messiah or not? For, as I before said, here I met with two different great systems, which both professed to be based upon the Bible, viz., Judaism and Christianity. True, I saw immediately, that the present Judaism (whether orthodox or reformed) could in no wise claim to be based upon the Bible. For what is Judaism without sacrifices, without temple and high priest? Nothing but hollow forms, for *those* were the essence of it; and how can man now, consistently with the Bible, escape the curse of God hanging over him, that remaineth not in all things which the Lord commandeth? How can fasting, prayers, good works, &c., alter the immovable justice of a holy God, which requires the punishment due to sin? God *cannot*, according to His nature, accept the sinner in himself, his penitence, fasting, prayers, and good works, be they ever so numerous and great. I speak here of a *real* fasting; for I need not mention

the worthlessness of a mere outward abstinence; when one wishes the day to be soon over, that the fasting and prayer may have an end, that he may be discharged of that troublesome duty, which is not a *privilege* but a punishment to him. This, I am sorry to say, is the feeling of many of my *reformed* brethren. And then, how can we do good works, even if we try to do them in the best possible manner, so long as we are in our natural state? What is our intention in doing them, seeing that God judges the heart? Is it with a view to our own individual benefit, temporally or spiritually, or does the love of God constrain us? Have we any ultimate object besides ourselves? —These, and questions of a similar nature, led me to discover, that any thing which is done *by us*, cannot possibly justify us; or, in other words, “by the deeds of the law, no *flesh* can be justified.” By nature we are all included under the wrath and curse of God; and Judaism (whether modern or orthodox, whether Deism or Jewish Popery), which still pretends to work out salvation in such a manner, is hence utterly contrary to reason, and deviating from the word of God, as expressed in the

Old Testament. But let us see, on the other hand, what the Bible itself offers us, as an atonement for our sins; for we showed above, that the Bible, having proceeded from a *merciful* and *loving*, as well as a just and holy Jehovah, must open for us a way of escape. Sin-offering has now ceased; but even if it were again established, could it in *itself* justify the sinner, or could a dumb animal reconcile for man's transgression? In itself certainly not; but still it is said, Leviticus xvii. 11, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; *for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*" And so the blood in the sacrifice being the atonement, it must, though of no value in itself, still have had some spiritual meaning; and what is that?

It was at this stage of my inquiry, that I read the history of Jesus more diligently; He being pointed out to me as the essence of that which the sacrificial blood typified, which again brought me back to a careful and impartial study of the prophets, and especially Isaiah. I cannot look back upon this period without still, as it were, feeling in my heart the echo of

the effect, which the fifty-third chapter of this prophet made upon me. Is not here a sufficient explanation given of all the seeming mysteries? Take it simply as it is, without trying to supply artificial, inconsistent, and oftentimes utterly absurd comments; and will it not at once point to a lamb, to a sin-offering, one, through whose stripes believing sinners are to be healed? And feeling that I am a dying sinner, why should I not accept this healing so graciously offered? Let me rather seek to find out whether their really is healing under His wings; and let me more closely inquire into the precious truth herein revealed. For, if the explanation thus afforded by the prophet be true, then it must also give a key to all the difficulties of this kind in the Old Testament; and, opening the spiritual meaning of the law, must enlighten our eyes with light from above, even with the illuminating and warming sun of Jehovah. Oh, if people were only as willing to seek truth as God is willing to reveal it, how few would remain in fatal ignorance, instead of the millions who are so now! How must, after a little careful reading, even the truth of these words appear to us!

“Novum Testamentum in vetere *latet*, vetus in nove *patet*.

New Testament lies in the Old *concealed*,
And, through the New, the Old becomes *revealed*.”

When arrived at this period of my spiritual inquiry, I must thankfully acknowledge the great profit, which, under God, I derived from the perusal of an excellent book (Confessions of a Proselyte), written by my esteemed friend, Dr. Frankel, of Elberfeld; of which, I regret that no English translation has yet appeared. This very valuable work helped to clear up a great many difficulties, and to show me, under the direction of God's Spirit, the following truths, which I will just mention briefly. It taught me that the Old Testament reveals the existence of a Trinity in Unity. In addition to the direct assertion thereof, in the Old Testament, I may here bring forward a few things that occurred to my mind, in order to show the reasoning, as far as I can remember it, through which I came to mental conviction; which may, by the blessing of God, be useful to some of my brethren, who may be in the same position as I was then. God, as being *eternal love*, must necessarily be Three-

One. As subject, He is the eternal *I*; and, according to his nature as love, necessarily objectivising Himself (the eternal *Thou*); and the produce of both these, *the common love* of the eternal *I* and eternal *Thou* (if I may be allowed to call it so, for we are men, and have no expressions for things which surpass human knowledge, and can only be practically taught by God himself), *the connecting bond of these two* is the Holy Spirit, (1 Cor. ii. 2). It seems to me unnecessary, and contrary to the object of the present narrative to enter more fully on the point, and to cite here, as I might do, the opinions of Schelling, Frauenstäds, yea, even Hegel, and many others; and I must leave it to the study of my brethren, affectionately warning them, however, of the insufficiency of a mere head-knowledge, and directing them to the *only* effectual way (as the course of my narrative will also show), that of coming prayerfully to God, who is willing to open both our minds and hearts to this blessed truth.

If the divine nature of the Messiah is proved, the Trinity is of course undeniable. I will not, however, expatiate on the point here, as it has been so ably done by many others, but I will

ask only one question: If the fifty-third of Isaiah refers to a man, is it not absurd to suppose that one sinful man can atone for another? Volumes, indeed, could be written on this point, and innumerable passages of scripture cited, to show, that God himself is to be *our righteousness*. Were I to cite and explain the various passages referring to it which worked upon my own mind, it would draw out the present narrative to an undue length.

One word more only on this subject. The reader will remember one difficulty I met with, and which I have stated, but not answered, because I had not arrived at the period of my history where I could do so: I mean, how the justice of God requiring the eternal death of *every sinner*, any one could escape it? or, in other words, how justice and mercy could be united. I defy any one to explain this difficulty, except in the way the Bible does,—through the sacrifice as a type of, and in dependence upon, the death of the Messiah; or in the fulness of time, by the sacrifice itself, through the death of the Messiah, offered up once for sin, and making hereby an eternal

atonement. Having borne the curse of God for men, eternal salvation is thereby introduced into the world. Here then is a punishment required by the justice of God; and His mercy, having, in this very justice, so strikingly revealed itself, can now enter on its most glorious manifestation. This greatest of all wonders, mercy and truth, are met together,—righteousness and peace have kissed each other! This it was which removed every difficulty, and explained the mystery. And canst thou, O my brother, stand unmoved when thou beholdest it? Canst thou refrain from the contemplation and meditation of this blessed, glorious, and wonderful truth? the greatest measure of love, yea, such love as only God can have manifested in this very justice. “O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments; His ways past finding out!”

Having been convinced of the Trinity, as well as of the divine nature of the Messiah, the question occurred, whether this Messiah had come or not; and on this point I was soon instructed to see that Jesus is the Messiah.

Who could read the history of the meek and lowly Jesus and not cry out—no! this cannot be a deceiver? And if he is not a deceiver, then he *must* be the son of God. Here is no middle way. Who that reads, in the last chapter of any one of the gospels, the account of His death (perhaps more especially so in St. John), could deny the *more* than human patience, forbearance, and humility of Jesus! Besides, whence have these fishermen, who first received and preached the Gospel, become apostles? And well may we here ask, with the Jews of old, are not all these which speak Galileans? and how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Do we not find our very hearts laid open in their, or rather, in the Holy Spirit's writings? And whence the power to perform miracles publicly, which are recorded again publicly, and written down and handed over to those who had been present at their performance? And will you tell me, that if that had been true, all Jews would have believed in Him? I point to you Jeremiah, who seemed to prophesy in vain, and to the striking passage in St. Luke, xvi. 31,—
 “If they hear not Moses and the prophets,

neither will they be persuaded, though one (even) rose from the dead." (Comp. Isa. xxix. 9—15.) Whence the strength of the apostles,—whence their courage,—whence their perseverance? How are all the scripture testimonies to the Messiah fulfilled in Him? How has also Gen. xlix. 10, Daniel, ix. 26, 27, been so strikingly brought about? Surely those coincidences are not accidental; for, in the first place, *nothing* is accidental; and then all this has been prophesied of in connection with the Messiah. Out of the acknowledgment of the above-mentioned great truth the others all followed in my own mind, as natural consequences. Having come now so far in my narrative as to be able to say *my mind was convinced* of the truth of Christianity, I will, before concluding this portion, take a view of the position in which I stood. I knew then that the Bible (both Old and New Testament) was the word of God; that therein a Triune just and holy God was proclaimed, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that God had promised and sent His Son as the Messiah into the world; and that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah:—and by this knowledge the first step was made.

God's Spirit had convinced me of my sin and misery; my mind was by him enlightened in the knowledge of Christ; but not yet "was my will renewed, and I persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to me in the Gospel." (Westminster Assembly's Catechism.) Whatever man can learn and know by his intellect, I now knew and had learned; but it had not yet reached my heart; I had not yet experienced the teaching of the Spirit within. A good work had commenced, but the stony heart was not yet taken away; and I could only say, with my brethren of old (Acts ii. 37), "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" When in this condition, I thought, in my ignorance of the new birth, that all that could be done was now done; and I intended then to apply for baptism. But my heart being yet unchanged, I began to feel what it meant to be about to leave father and mother, to take the cross and to follow Christ. What would the consequences of this step be? Not only should I lose all my present worldly prospects thereby, which weighed comparatively little in my estimation, but what would the world say? what would all those say, who knew and

esteemed me before? Would they not think that I had wholly changed my formerly respectable character? Would not my brethren, and even all the Christians, despise me now? How did I judge before of all those who become proselytes? But then, what reason is there for so doing? Is it not both unreasonable and unjust to hate a man because he entertains a different opinion from our own? And how then is the injustice of others to restrain *me* from doing my duty? But then the Jews looked upon me for future defence and support in their struggles; and is it fair now to disappoint them, and to leave the weaker and oppressed party, and betake myself to the stronger and oppressing one? But then, if the latter be in the right, is it not my duty to follow them? And then, finally, and worse than all, what will my parents say? I dare not even hope that my mother will allow me to enter her house any more. But still it is my duty, and I *must*, therefore, do it, be the consequences what they may.

I now attended public worship regularly on Sunday, and most striking was the difference in which, in my estimation the preached word

now appeared to me. Formerly, it was either an offence, or, at least, intolerable foolishness to me; it either roused my conscience, or became a wearisome repetition of (what I then thought) the same fable. But now, with what intense attention I listen to the declaration of the truth of God; of that which I found now to be the *only* wisdom, in the absolute sense of the word! I went to my beloved teacher in the Lord one Sabbath, after service, to ask baptism from him; but after a short conversation, he refused it for the present. I went home mourning. To be separated from all my old friends and my family; to sacrifice all; and still not to be received into the Christian church! But the wound inflicted thereby proved to be, by the blessing of God, a most salutary one. Here the account of my mental conviction, which I have given very shortly and imperfectly, ends, and the history of the renewing of my will, as I trust, begins; which I will briefly narrate; but before quitting this part of my subject, let me ask any dear brother, according to the flesh: Does this not stir thee up, at least to *inquire* whether Jesus be the Messiah or not; or dost

thou still, without impartial or careful perusal of Holy Writ, declare Christianity to be foolishness, not worthy even of thy attention? or darest thou go forward and say, in spite of all the experience had by many of thy brethren,—in spite of the truth of God, clearly revealed in the Old Testament,—no, I *will* not hear? Awake, ere it is too late! awake, ere thou canst not awake any more! awake, ere thou awakest in hell!

It is not without a certain kind of fear that I enter now upon an account of that blessed work, which, as I humbly trust, the Spirit of God began in me.

When I had thus been refused baptism, I returned home with a heavy heart, and urged the next day, my teacher to tell me, why he had not admitted me into the outward church. He showed me in few, but impressive words, how little knowledge I had as yet of my own sinfulness, and how little I could consequently have *experienced* of the grace of God; my head might be convinced, but this could as little warrant my admission into the church, as it could procure me a heavenly inheritance. This went deep into my heart. To *know*, and still

perhaps to perish ! What, if death were just now spreading his wings over me ? I hear the moving of my watch ; behold, how one minute drives the other, and one hour the other ; and one week, and month, and year the other ! Every moment, as it passes, carries me in its flight nearer to the grave, nearer judgment, nearer hell, if I be unconverted. Oh ! brethren these are all well-known truths ; but they cease to be *notions*, they become *fearful realities*, as soon as God's Spirit applies them to the heart.

I went home, and prayed. Here was another epoch of my life. I prayed till my heart grew warmer and warmer, and I felt what it was to pray. By-and-by God's sun began to shine into my heart, and I beheld something, both of the dreadful depths of my depravity, and of the glory of Jesus on the cross, exalted a prince and a Saviour. At that time my heart appeared to myself like a glass of clear fountain water, examined with a microscope : the same water, which was formerly thought so pure, is now seen to be full of little insects ; a little world, moving and stirring about. So also with me, pride, vanity, and unbelief, had never appeared to me so dreadful, till the Spirit of

God held before me the command of a just and holy Jehovah. "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

My anxiety for a new heart grew till the blessed Jesus began to send me some answer. It would be needless to try to describe my feelings at that time. I am only thankful that I was led to write down, every evening, some of my thoughts, which I carefully preserve, as a refreshment to my soul, when sometimes near to despair. How happy was I then in my first love! I forgot *all* around me. I laid aside my once so cherished studies, and gave myself wholly to the reading of God's word, and prayer, with the exception of some time, which I devoted to the reading of some parts of the excellent book of that eminent *father in Israel*, Dr. Keith.

I submitted now quietly to the refusal of baptism, knowing, that the Lord would send it in His own good time. And so He did; and that, through the instrumentality of a person, from whom I could have least expected it. As students do generally, and poor ones especially, I had shared in the use of my little room, with

a young Rabbi, who, having finished with great eminence his Talmudical studies, gave now his whole attention to other sciences, which we hence prosecuted unitedly. Many a night we sat together on our narrow bedside, reading together, and drawing with profound delight, from the broken cistern of an unhallowed literature. Many an evening we had, after a hard day's work, leaned together at the window, exchanging our thoughts, desires, and cares. Thus, the bond which connected us became stronger and stronger. My friend had sometimes visited my teachers, but standing on the verge of infidelity, he had kept aloof from the invitations of the gospel. He could not but observe the change of mind which was going on in me : no more did we unite in study, or the exchange of feeling ; sometimes, though I tried to conceal it, he found me with my face covered with my hands, as if praying ; he also saw me continually reading the New Testament. All this excited his doubts about me, to which he gave finally utterance, and which I answered frankly, by telling him, that I was convinced of the truth of Christianity. Amazed, he could not understand how I had not yet

publicly professed Jesus, and after having explained all, and having once more solemnly, in the presence of Jehovah, questioned me, he bade me follow him. Silently we went through the streets, to my beloved father in the Lord, whom my friend questioned harshly, about my being not yet admitted into the church, since I was surely a Christian. In consequence, a day was appointed for conversation with me in reference to that holy ordinance.

When again returned home, my friend explained to me, what I could easily understand, how, on account of his relations, he could no longer live with me in the same house, though his love to me (as he had shown a short time before) would remain unchanged.

The next evening, I made the first, and indeed, not the easiest sacrifice to my faith, by leaving that little beloved room, which had witnessed so many transitions in my life.

My friend visited now my house only late at night, or very early in the morning, in order not to be observed.

Soon after, I was publicly admitted into the church; having before made all my Jewish acquaintances aware of it. General was the

expression of sorrow among all of them ; who (I am happy to say) never regarding me as a man who acted against his conviction, treated me always after with the very same esteem, which I had enjoyed before. I cannot attempt to describe the feelings which agitated me on the day of my baptism : my evening thoughts of this day being as follows :—

“ He that has a voice, let him lift it up to heaven, loudly praising. He that has a tongue, let him speak with it of the wonders of our God ; he shall not want words, nor shall he lack sounds, for God is with him, and in him . Let him, who desireth joy, come to our Lord and let him, who seeks after pleasure, hasten to his Messiah. For in Him alone there is delight, in Him alone is salvation, in Him alone is eternal life.”

I became now, in every sense of the word, a child ; my pleasures, my whole trust, was in my Father ; relying upon him, I went boldly forward making joyfully my profession, and defending my belief against all attacks. That was a time of happiness : no remorse was following me, no care was troubling me ; all round me was spring, because in me there was

now spring. The place where I lived had for centuries not been visited by true gospel preaching, which was carried there only by my beloved teachers. Hence (for they taught me nothing but Christ) it is explainable how ignorant I was of the unhappy divisions in the Christian church, of which I became first aware when betaking myself to the university. I was asked, whether I was a predestinarian or not; not whether a believer or not, but whether a Reformed or Lutheran. The love to Jesus, His kingdom, and my poor blind brethren, which had animated my teachers to leave their home, and to seek for perishing souls, I imagined to be generally prevailing in that country from which they came, and I thought it a Paradise on earth. Poor child that I was, I saw at present only two classes of men; those few who were disciples of Christ, forming a true union through faith, and the others all standing without. I knew Jesus and His body, the church: and the devil and his body, the world. No trials from false friends had as yet overtaken me: I had no idea, as yet, of those fair-speaking, backbiting, all-sweet, and all-hating creatures who too often call themselves Chris-

tians. Alas ! I was soon to be mournfully disappointed ; and instead of being comforted by all who professed Christ, I was soon left to the comfort which Jesus alone offers. But I will rather be silent on this point, as it calls forth too many bitter recollections.

The first fortnight passed thus in the richest and purest delight, when I was called upon to behold, every day, new beauties in my Redeemer. Some like-minded men, who were looking forward to the same ordinance which I had already received, together with our pastors, formed a flock of men whose happiness was unmingled and undisturbed. I find it is impossible to speak about the patriarchal simplicity and the strength of the bond which united us : we were in fact one family, whose head was Jesus Christ himself. Soon I was called upon finally to select the calling in life which I would follow. I trust I was guided by the Lord to decide on the ministry, with a view to the missionary work ; the preparation for which, I trust, will soon give place to the office itself. My thoughts on it were, at that time, as follows :—

“Since the time of my conversion, I calmly observe every day bringing me nearer to death. I have merely one desire before I depart, one which I cannot suppress, one which God has put into my heart, and which will not expire even with my last breath; that is, to be in the service of my Saviour—to win souls for the kingdom of heaven from my outcast brethren; and thus to be in God’s hand the weak instrument to collect, perhaps, some of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. This is my daily prayer, and I am sure that the Lord will, in his unspeakable grace, open a way for it, seeing that I pray in the name of Jesus for it. When I have attained that, then I will die joyfully in the Lord, for I know that my Saviour liveth, and sitteth at the right hand of God, and shall give me a place in ‘the new Jerusalem.’”

But of this and many other circumstances (from reasons easily to be understood) I cannot speak any more; suffice it to say, that the Lord *has* opened a way, and that till the time that I entered upon my professional studies, I exhorted publicly and privately all to come

and to receive Jesus freely offered in the gospel. On a missionary tour to my native place, I met with the first persecution, both from my own relatives and the world. But the Lord held me up, and gave me in his unbounded mercy a soul for my hire, which, by its wonderful conversion and consistent profession under great trials, formed afterwards one of the brightest ornaments of the Saviour's church. A heavy trial awaited me also here. Before my baptism I had not informed my parents of the step I was about to take, knowing too well their disapproval of it; and here not wishing to offend them more than necessary by direct disobedience to their express command, sinful fear had kept me silent as to the step I had taken; but now I was obliged to write to them concerning it. Well may the reader imagine with what feelings I did so. But I had made it a matter of much prayer; and to my surprise and delight, some time after, I was restored, not only to their love, but enjoyed their confidence more than ever. The Lord has been also pleased to bless some of my weak labours in his vineyard; and my friend, the young Rabbi also was stirred up to an earnest enquiry,

the results of which, after so long an interval begin now, by the instrumentality of more efficient labourers, to appear.

Quickly these six months, the happiest of my life, passed away, and a new relation began. Since then the Lord has been pleased to discipline me by more or less chastisements and trials, of which I cannot speak. But if the Lord *leads* only, what matters it *how*? We know that he leads to *green pastures*, and to *quiet waters* (perhaps in tears and sorrows); and here we might well say, that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than even John. My defence is of God, who preserves the upright in heart. In Thee "our fathers trusted; they trusted and Thou didst deliver them." If God is for us, who may be against us? yea, if the whole world rise, if a host encamp against us, still He will stand at our right hand, lest we be greatly moved. He will hide us in his pavilion at the evil time, fill our cup, anoint our heads with oil, and make us to shout aloud for joy! Blessed be His holy name for ever.

Let us now beware, brethren, lest we write or read to our own condemnation; for this

brief and imperfect narrative will testify against us, if we believe not. Oh! may God grant that we all may meet at the *right* hand of Jesus, where there is fulness of joy for evermore.

A. E

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. IV.

ISAAC DA COSTA.

I cannot present the Jewish Witness, No IV. to my readers without a few words of affectionate exhortation to my dear brethren. They repeatedly state, that it is only ignorant and uneducated Jews who embrace Christianity. Absurd as this assertion is, it is so often repeated that it passes current with many, who have neither opportunity nor inclination to inquire into its truth. Through the kindness of my beloved brother, who has yielded to my urgent entreaties, not only to give an account of his conversion, but to give it with his name, I am enabled to show my dear brethren of the house of Israel, that one of the master-minds of the day, one who is not only the greatest poet that Holland has produced, but is equally renowned as a philosopher, a theologian, and a politician; this man, brought up in hatred and contempt of Christianity, has been brought by the force of truth, and the power of Divine grace, to be a humble disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. O brethren! Ought ye not to enquire whether ye be not rejecting the truth of God, to your own condemnation?

You request of me, dear brother, some account of my conversion to the Christian religion, and to the faith in Jesus Christ; and I cannot refuse to tell the things which the God of our fathers has wrought in my soul. I will cheerfully join my testimony with that of my brethren, both by nature and in grace, who endeavour to instruct others and to teach their hearts by retracing the ways of God towards them in His providence and His grace.

To set His dispensations towards me in a clearer light, I must refer to many long past events. A son of Israel is constantly reminded that his personal history is closely linked with that of his fathers. I must then crave indulgence for prefacing my account with some particulars respecting my parentage, which I derive from one of the Jewish families that have for several ages dwelt in the Spanish peninsula. Some of my ancestors in that country professed Catholicism, first by compulsion; and afterwards (a case by no means uncommon in the history of our people in Spain and Portugal) from conviction, or, at least, in sincerity. Humanly speaking we might still have inhabited that country, and

professed the Romish faith; but one of the members of our family, Canon Treconis, of the collegiate church of Oporto, gave up, in consequence of his doubts on religion, his office and his country to return to the Synagogue of his ancestors.

We learn from various biographical works* the history of Gabriel (*Judaic* Uriel) da Costa (Latin, a Costa) who with his younger brothers, was circumcised at Amsterdam, where, after falling into complete infidelity, his life ended very unhappily. It is from one of these younger brothers, Joseph da Costa, that I take my descent, by the direct male line. My family belonged, during two centuries, to the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue in Amsterdam, where it enjoyed all the privileges which Holland then presented to my nation in its exile and tribulation. My father, who shared in the sentiment of devotedness to the house of Orange, so common amongst the Jews, and who was therefore very inimical to the revolution, educated me in the same prin-

* *Exemplar Vitæ Humanæ*, printed at the end of the *Colloquy of Limborch with Prabio*. Bayle, *Dict. Historique*, art.—A. Costa. Wolf, *Bib. Rabbin*, &c.

ciples. He was a very upright man; and gifted with a large share of good sense; and my education was to him an object of the most affectionate care and solicitude. His religious principles were by no means those of a strict Jew, although he maintained a decorous respect for the outward ordinances of religion. My mother was much more inclined to the religious observances of modern Judaism.

From childhood my mind had been partially influenced by a sort of religious instinct, a vague desire to know and serve God, whilst I was, at the same time, involved in doubt and uncertainty, both as to Revelation itself, and with regard to the ordinances, and the oral traditions of the Rabbis. At times I strenuously addicted myself to the devotional use of the prayers, the rites and commandments of my religion; at others, I relapsed into doubt, and gave way to a distaste for all these outward observances. The scoffing and irreligious philosophy of the eighteenth century inspired me with horror; and my attention was earnestly directed to the acquiring of an intelligent conviction respecting the existence and government of God, and the immortality of the soul.

But the books I consulted in my search into these high interests failed to afford me satisfaction. Their arguments were not of sufficient weight fully to convince me of their truth, nor did their reasonings fix me in complete incredulity. Materialism alarmed, distressed, and shocked me. But the subtleties of Plato, of Mendelsohn, and others, could not reach my heart, nor warm it. My mind was at that time far from being convinced of the historical fact of Revelation, or of the veracity of the Old Testament, of Moses, and the Prophets. And although in the midst of this uncertainty, I still clung to the great recollections of my nation, from a feeling of natural pride, my commerce with unbelievers, and my study of philosophers, had wrought in my mind so far as to exclude the idea of an immediate and positive revelation. I had formed a sort of deistical system, in which were mingled rabbinical and Mosaic principles. I looked upon Jesus Christ as a light proceeding from Israel for the illumination of the Gentiles: meanwhile the vanities of the world and sin ruled in my daily life. Such was the state of my mind when in the providence of God two events

occurred which had a marked influence on my future course.

My father, perceiving my inclination for study, destined me to the career of jurisprudence, a pursuit which, though formerly closed to the Jews, had been partially opened to them since the revolution of 1795. From the age of thirteen to fifteen years (1811—1813), having attended regularly the Latin classes in my native city of Amsterdam, I began a course of lessons with the Professor of Antiquities and Literature, a man of learning, and possessed of a highly refined taste. His historical lectures gave him ample opportunity for asserting and setting in a conspicuous light the truth and high authority of the writings of Moses, and he earnestly vindicated those records from the sophisms and fallacies of Voltaire, and the other sceptics of the age. The idea of a *positive revelation* was now awakened in my mind ; I began to believe in the divinity of the Old Testament, and this great truth gradually developed, was to me as a beacon amidst doubt and obscurity. Revealed religion, the divine authority of the Bible, is an historical fact.

My study of the Bible history was soon

followed by enquiries which originated partly, I must own, from national pride. In the midst of the contempt and dislike of the world for the name of Jew, I had ever gloried in it. I began, therefore, to study the history of our families, and of our nation, in Spain and Portugal, in respect to its theology—its poetry—its attainments in science—its political and diplomatic position, taking a general review of its prosperity and of its astonishing calamities. Throughout their history, both ancient and modern, I perceived something so extraordinary as to be quite inexplicable, unless we view the Jews as the subjects of remarkable privileges, and of as remarkable downfall; of a special election of God, and of an enormous crime on the part of the elect people. It was thus that the consideration of modern Judaism prepared me for the knowledge of that religion, which alone is the solution and the fulfilment of the pure and divine Judaism of the Old Testament.

Another circumstance in my life tended to my further enlightenment. The perusal of the ancient classics, the political events of 1813 and 1815, even the study of the history of my

fathers according to the flesh, awakened in my soul the faculties of poetry. As a youthful poet, I was presented by a learned Hebraist of our nation to the greatest of our Dutch contemporary poets, the celebrated Bilderdyk (who died at the age of 75 years in 1831). He was a remarkable man in all respects, and one whose political and religious convictions, and originality of mind and character, had armed all this present age, at least in his own country, against him. Misunderstood, persecuted, banished (in 1795), harrassed by all sorts of misfortunes, he had found from his youth, strength and consolation in the gospel of Christ. Attached in heart to the truths of the confession of the Reformed Churches, he had besides early perceived the glorious future, announced by the prophets to the ancient people of God, and how their conversion to the Messiah, crucified by them, would be one day to the nations at large like life from the dead. From thence arose a particular attachment to Israel for their fathers' sake, and for the love of Christ, who sprung from Israel according to the flesh. Very naturally, I felt strongly drawn towards this extraordinary man. I

became his disciple, and also his intimate friend for eighteen years to the day of his death. It is to him, under the hand of God, and through His adorable grace, that I saw the light which led me to the Christian religion, and to the faith in Jesus, my Saviour, and my God. Not that Bilderdyk ever sought to make a proselyte of his young disciple. With a wisdom which I can attribute to nothing but the direction of the Almighty, he rather endeavoured not to sway my mind by the influence which his superior intelligence gave him over me. He only endeavoured to render me more of an Israelite than is consistent with the wisdom of the present age. He spoke to me of the Old Testament; he directed my attention to the prophecies, to the promises given to the fathers, to the portions of revealed truth, preserved even in the traditions of the Rabbis (Messiah Ben David and Messiah Ben Joseph, &c. &c.) Especially he tried to make me feel that the true Christian shares in the hopes of Israel in regard to a glorious reign of Messiah upon the throne of David; and that on the other hand (it is thus that he expressed himself in a piece of poetry which he addressed to me

in 1819), the sincere Jew is a Christian in hope.

Soon the hand of God led us further on. It was in 1820. Bilderdyk and I were engaged in a deeply serious conversation on the things of God and of truth. In the ardour of discourse he happened to say to me, that the ancient Jews themselves had acknowledged a plurality of persons in the ineffable unity of God. That God seeing himself, contemplating himself, reflecting himself, begot his Son from all eternity; and that the Son is He whom Christians adore in the person of Jesus Christ crucified.

Then did my eyes perceive the first rays of new light. I began to read the New Testament; I read that unspeakably sublime and blessed word (John i. 6—14), "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh." I began to feel an abhorrence of sin, for which the Saviour himself manifested in the flesh, had suffered the death of the cross. I perceived the fulfilment of the prophecies of Isaiah, xi., liii., lxi., and in Psalms xxii. cx., &c., &c. I adored—I believed, and

by degrees this faith operated upon my conscience and my practice. Religion was no longer merely a sublime speculation, or a great national interest ; I found that I must become the property of Jesus Christ, that I must live to Him, and by Him. Twenty years have elapsed since that period. Shame in the sight of God and before men befits me in recording so holy an obligation. But He who called me from the midst of darkness is faithful. He will not suffer me to quit this life without having truly glorified him with my lips, and in my life, by the faith which alone saves. During the early days of my convictions I had, though with some hesitation, opened my mind on the subject, to my friend Capadose. We soon entered into a full discussion of it—and our conversations were more and more directed to the great questions of the truth and salvation ; we read and examined together. A third inquirer into the Scriptures and the truth in Christ, was soon after joined with us. God gave me, in 1821, a wife whose choice from the first communication we had together on this all-important subject, was in accord with my own. By a remarkable provi-

dence of our God, Hannah Belmonte, my cousin, betrothed to me in 1820, had been (through a train of family circumstances) brought up in a school of Christian young ladies. Having been admitted to share their religious instructions, she became acquainted with the catechism of Heidelberg, and had heard the blessed name of Jesus before I did. From the time I imparted to her what was passing in my own mind, she became to me a beloved sister in Christ, as well as a faithful companion in the trials of life, and in the search after eternal life through faith in our great God and Saviour. Together with our friend Capadose, we were baptized the 20th October, 1822, at Leyden; and the Lord afterwards added to us three other members of our family. We kept up a good understanding, and uninterrupted communion of feeling with my mother-in-law Belmonte, and her eldest daughter, Esther; though we were far from anticipating the happy change and renewal of heart and life, which quickly developed itself. By the Divine blessing, a conversation that my mother-in-law and I had together, one evening, was made the means of arousing her

to a serious concern for the salvation of her soul, and this example was soon followed by her daughter. Both displayed great eagerness for Christian instruction, and shortly after they openly confessed the name of the Lord Jesus, and were baptized by the venerable and pious Pierre Chevalier (pastor of the Walloon church in this town)—and who is now with them before the throne of the Lamb.

Our mother, then aged sixty-eight years, survived her baptism two years, a period which she devoted almost entirely to prayer and studying the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, her previous reading having been confined to the most frivolous publications. Perfect peace was the portion of her latter days, and her last words were, "Come Lord Jesus!" Her daughter Esther, who afterwards married the worthy son of the Walloon pastor, our intimate friend and brother, Mons. J. Chevalier, after a most edifying course of devotedness to her Lord and Saviour, died in her confinement in June, 1840. Her soul also reposes in peace in the bosom of Abraham, and in the full fruition of His presence who redeemed her with His blood.

Another member of our family, who had become a disciple of Christ, and had been baptized some time after us (but quite independently of us), had preceded our dear sister in death; delivered from the depths of sin by the healing grace of the Lord, he had found pardon and eternal life through the new and living way of the blood of Christ. After having studied theology, he was about to assume the pastoral charge of one of our churches, when he was called to his rest.

To God the most holy, be thanksgiving and praise for his unspeakable mercies in life, in death, and throughout all eternity. Amen.

ISAAC DA COSTA.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. V.

DR. CAPADOSE.

HAVING presented my readers with an account of the conversion of M. Da Costa, I think it will be interesting to follow it up by that of his friend, Dr. Capadose, who was baptized along with him. His touching narrative was published more than nine years since, and is doubtless known to many of my readers ; but I feel sure they will read it again with new interest, after having perused that of Da Costa. I have considerably abridged it ; in some passages, therefore, it is rather the substance than the actual words of the original narrative.

I will no longer delay, dear friends, to comply with your request that I would communicate in writing the mode in which it pleased the God of all grace to bring me to the knowledge of Himself, and to lead me out of darkness into His marvellous light.

Being deeply sensible that it was not of

myself I sought after God, but that my compassionate Lord came to seek me when I was lost, it would be false modesty if I were now to withhold an account which, when verbally communicated, interested and edified many dear friends, who therein traced the great love of the Saviour towards a poor sinner like me, and thus were led to ascribe all the glory to Him whose name is blessed for evermore. May this glory be the only object I shall keep in view in this account! Such is the sincere desire of my heart; and I ask of God to guide my pen in truth and sincerity, that I may be kept from all self-seeking, into which the necessity of speaking of myself might betray me.

Although I was by birth a Portuguese Israelite, I was by no means zealous for the religion of my fathers. My education was rather moral than religious; and though taught to hate vice, and to love what the world calls virtue, I owe it entirely to the grace of God that at an after period I was preserved from open impiety.

At an early age I was captivated by science and literature. I was fond of balls, plays, and every worldly amusement; but study afforded

me still greater satisfaction. I became acquainted with the works of Voltaire and Rousseau at an early period of my life ; but their false principles, and still more, the frightful consequences of their system, as exhibited before my eyes in the history of the French revolution, preserved me, by the divine mercy, from their hurtful influence. My parents having destined me for the medical profession, I considered it my duty to acquire the knowledge requisite for this calling ; but I felt more inclination for the study of the theoretical sciences, and for philosophic research.

My friends were nearly all young men who made an outward profession of Christianity ; but the Lord had given me one friend among my near relatives.* As we were both Israelites, and had been intimate from childhood, our views on all subjects were very similar. (Dr. C. here proceeds to state their intercourse with Bilderdyk, which, as it is in substance the same as the account given by Da Costa, I pass over). The religious element, if I may call it so, had not as yet entered into my soul. In my early childhood, it is true, I had often felt

* M. Da Costa.

an undefined need of prayer ; and when about nine years' old, had asked my parents to give me a book of prayers, either in the French or Dutch language, that I might understand them better.* I strongly urged my younger brothers and sisters to the same practice ; and this was the more remarkable as I had very seldom seen any one engaged in prayer in my father's house. From that time, amid all the changes of my outward life, I never omitted the performance of this duty ; and until my conversion to Christianity, it constituted all my religious worship. The prayer I used ended with these remarkable words : — " I wait for thy salvation, O Lord ! " I have preserved the book containing it, and never look upon it without adoring the goodness of that " God of my salvation," who has condescended to bestow upon me, at a matured age, the blessing that the child of nine years' old, hardly knowing what he asked, failed not to solicit from Him every night before he lay down to rest.

During the period in which I was engaged

* It is the general custom of the Jews to use the Hebrew language in private as well as public prayer.

in my studies, I occasionally experienced very peculiar emotions. A poor woman used to sing psalms in the street on Saturday evenings, to excite the compassion of the passengers; and more than once have I left my books to listen to her, overpowered by emotions which I could neither comprehend nor describe. At the theatre also, when *Joseph in Egypt* was represented, my tears flowed at the sound of the morning prayer, which was imitated from the Hebrew. At the synagogue, however, which, for the sake of decorum, I still frequented, nothing had the least power to interest me. On the contrary, the unmeaning ceremonies which appealed not to the heart, the want of reverence, the bawling noise, the discordant singing, and lastly, the employment of a language of which three-fourths of the congregation did not understand a word, disgusted me so much, that I ceased to attend it regularly, having always a great aversion to hypocrisy.

In the mean time, as if the tempter had foreseen what was afterwards to take place, he induced my friend and myself to change our mode of life. We disliked half measures, and could not endure the modern Judaism

which chooses at its pleasure to dispense with the requirements of the Mosaic law; we therefore resolved to become Israelites indeed, rigidly observing all the prescriptions of the law, and thus compelling Christians to entertain a higher respect for the Jewish religion. National pride was now our ruling motive. In this spirit, and with these views, we began assiduously to read the Bible. But, oh! the shame and wretchedness of the unconverted heart! We could not get beyond Genesis. Constant ridicule and jesting, and oftentimes even blasphemy, (Lord, enter not into judgment with us!) were upon our lips instead of prayer; so that I at length told my friend it was better to abandon our reading altogether than to engage in it in such a manner.

Thus our proposed plan vanished like smoke. My term of study was nearly completed. This was in 1818. I took my degrees in medicine, left the university, and returned to my native city, Amsterdam, full of bright prospects for the future. I had an uncle there, one of the first physicians in Holland, a learned man, and highly esteemed by the principal families. Having no children, he took me into his house

and adopted me as his son and successor. I was thus introduced at once to an extensive circle of acquaintance; kind and respectable, it is true, but with whom Christianity was a mere outward profession, accompanied by an entirely worldly life. None of these ever spoke to me on the subject of Christianity. I have even heard some of my young friends make a boast of their infidelity, and speak without reverence of the Lord Jesus Christ. I once expressed my astonishment at this, and said, that though I did not believe in Jesus, I thought that those who worshipped Him, and did not consider Him to be God, were mere idolators. A young physician who was of the party, who was afterwards savingly converted to God, told me some years after, how much ashamed he felt at the time, when receiving such a reproof from an Israelite.

In the midst of constant occupation, in the diligent pursuit of scientific knowledge, I yet felt an aching void within. I had been subject from childhood to an oppression of the chest, which made me pass many sleepless nights; and in these hours of wakefulness I often thought, "Why am I upon the earth? Why

was I created a man? Should I not be a thousand times happier if I were one of the lower animals? I should not then endure what I now suffer in my body and in my soul." Often did I cry out, "O that this day were my last!" Yet I was not disquieted on account of my sins, else I should have shuddered at the thought of death; I was under the burden and curse of sin, without knowing it, or seeking for the remedy.

One day I went to pay a visit to my friend who had been lately married. He had just received a letter from the celebrated professor already mentioned. "Would you like me to read it to you," said he, "together with some beautiful verses he has addressed to me?" I gladly assented to the proposal. The verses, in which he described, with power and feeling, the glorious hopes of Israel, concluded with the words, "Friend, be a Christian, and I die content." At these words, which he pronounced in an under tone, my indignation was roused; my friend, it appeared to me, was less shocked than he ought to have been. "Take care," said I, "there is a plan laid to seduce us." I left him immediately.

This occupied my thoughts all the rest of the day. I could not imagine how a man of such profound learning could believe the Christian religion. From that day, however, both my friend and myself began attentively to examine the word of God; and when we walked together we conversed on those passages that had struck us most. Having begun with the Gospel of Matthew, it was striking to me to perceive, that so far from seeking to subvert the authority of the Old Testament, he made it the basis whereon to build the Gospel of Christ.

My friend and I spent several months in this way, becoming daily more interested in our researches. At length, with thoughts and feelings very different from those which formerly possessed us, we again determined to read the Scriptures together. For this purpose we retired to a room in my father's house; and I can never think without emotion on these hallowed hours which we spent together, as in the presence of the God of our fathers. Our interest increased as we proceeded. My mind, wearied with vain speculations, now saw a new and boundless field open before it, towards which it was irresistably attracted; and

thus before I had ever heard of the electing love of God, I had experienced the power by which He draws to Christ those souls whom he designs to bless. This study of the word of God became at length the most urgent desire of my soul. Merely to *know* the truth did not satisfy me: I felt that I must really possess it, and live on its substance. I understood not then the work that was going on within me; but I occasionally experienced moments of delight arising from the conviction that divine assistance and protection accompanied the course I was pursuing.

One night, when reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, I was so much struck with its resemblance to the account of the sufferings of Christ which I had read in the Gospels, that I was almost convinced I had got another Bible instead of my own; being scarcely able to believe that this chapter, which may be truly entitled an abstract of the Gospel, was really in the Old Testament. "How," thought I, "can any Jew, after reading this chapter, doubt that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah!" Whence could this strong conviction arise? I had often read this chapter before; but now I

read it with the light of the Spirit of God. From this moment I recognized Christ as the promised Messiah, and this gave an entirely new character to our meditations on the word of God. It was the dawn of a glorious day to our souls, the light of which increased more and more, enlightening our minds, warming our hearts, and even then bestowing upon us unspeakable consolation. Many of the enigmas of life, which had hitherto puzzled and distressed me, were now explained; every thing seemed to revive around me, and the object and interest of my life were entirely changed. Happy days, thus gladdened by a sense of the Master's presence! Never can I forget them!

I believe it was by divine direction that my friend and I did not disclose to any one what was passing in our minds; and that we confined ourselves to the study of God's word, laying aside all other books except Heydeck's "Defence of the Christian Faith." This learned man had been a Rabbi in Germany, and having embraced the Romish religion, was made Professor of Oriental languages at Madrid. This book, written with great talent, and much knowledge of Scripture, is a defence of Christi-

anity against Rationalism. Its perusal was useful to us in two ways; we found that the powerful logic with which he combated the reasonings of Voltaire and Rousseau, entirely deserted him when he attempted to defend Popery against the doctrines of the Reformation.

Whenever I had any leisure in the morning, I used to shut myself up to read the word of God, as I dared not peruse it in my uncle's presence. One day I had been particularly considering the following passage in Isa. vii. 14, "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel." On going down stairs I found a Jewish physician, a friend of my uncle's, waiting for him in the ante-room. He was turning over the leaves of a new edition of the Bible. "There," said he, "is a fatal passage we cannot easily wrest from the Christians." It was the very passage I had been meditating upon. My soul was deeply moved, and I again perceived the guiding hand of my God. "Why, then," I replied, "should we not confess the truth?" My uncle now entered, and inquired what subject we were discussing. The physician informed him;

and knowing my uncle to be deeply versed in the Rabbinical writings, asked him what the Rabbis say on the passage. "Alas!" said my uncle, "only a mass of nonsense." With a beating heart I listened to this admission; and inwardly thanked God for having permitted me to hear these words from the lips of one whose Rabbinical learning made him to be considered as an authority by the Jews.

All these various circumstances convinced me more and more that truth is to be found in Christianity alone. I could not now be satisfied with mere knowledge, I longed for love. Then it was that the sun of righteousness shed abroad in our hearts, not only the light that illuminates, but the quickening warmth that enables the soul to live the life of God. I saw that love had led the Saviour to seek me. I perceived also my own sinful and miserable condition; but this feeling seemed absorbed in a sense of the divine love. In Christ I found my life,—the centre of all my thoughts and affections,—the sole object that could fill the void in my heart,—the key of all mysteries,—the principle of all true philosophy, yea the *truth* itself.

I daily felt more and more the necessity of openly avowing my sentiments. I can record, to the glory of God, that the certainty of losing a considerable property, if I declared myself a Christian, (which the event has confirmed) never for a moment entered into the scruples which made me hesitate. I dreaded the effect of the disclosures on the kind relative who had treated me as his son; on whose choleric temperament it might produce an impression that, at his advanced age, might be fatal. Doubtless, had my faith been stronger, I should have broken through every obstacle; but I could only suffer in silence, at the same time earnestly praying to God to come to my aid, and open a way before me.

And the God of mercy attended to the voice of my supplication. It was my uncle's custom to read the newspaper aloud after dinner. One day when I was sitting opposite to him in a state of great dejection, he read out the following news from Hamburgh:—"We have just witnessed a very interesting event. A Rabbi, after having announced to his co-religionists in the synagogue, that an attentive examination of the prophecies had convinced him that

Messiah has already come, and having made a confession of the Christian faith, was baptized a few days since in this city, and received as a minister of the gospel." On reading this, my uncle said the following words, which the position I was then in rendered so remarkable: "If this man has acted from self-interest, he is worthy of contempt: but if from conviction, he ought to be respected." Oh, Christians! You who can sympathize in the feelings of those like-minded with you, need I describe to you what passed in my mind at this solemn moment? In a transport of joy I fell on the neck of the venerable old man, saying, "Yes, uncle, and it is God who makes you feel thus; know that he whom you love with the tenderness of a father, is in the same case with this Rabbi!" I pronounced these words in such violent agitation, and in a tone so unusual, that my poor uncle thought I was out of my senses. He left the room for a few minutes, as if to allow me to recover myself; and at his return began to speak on a different subject.

I could see that although my uncle was annoyed at what had passed, he did not attach to my words the importance they deserved. I

therefore resolved, after having strengthened myself in God, to make the same declaration to him the following day. He could no longer shut his eyes to what had taken place; and a heart-rending scene followed. He beat his breast, lamented that ever he was born, and exclaimed, in the bitterness of his soul, that I was about to bring his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. His reproaches went to my heart; but the Lord strengthened and comforted me, and enabled me to show the dear old man such marks of tenderness as at length somewhat soothed him.

When the change became known to my family, they first used gentle means with me in the hope that these new notions might pass away; but finding I grew bold, and ventured to preach the gospel to them, they resorted to harsh treatment. It was a season of deep trial to my soul. This state of things increased the ardent desire I felt publicly to confess Christ. My family wished me to go into Germany, or some other country, for this purpose; but to this I objected, lest it should appear as if I were ashamed of the step I was about to take. My friend and I at length

decided on Leyden as the place where we should receive the rite of baptism. The 20th of October, 1822, was the day so ardently desired, on which we were admitted members of the church of Christ. Kneeling in the presence of the congregation, before the God of our fathers, who is the true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—we had the unspeakable joy, unworthy sinners as we were, to confess before the Christian church, the blessed name of that great God and Saviour who had come to seek and save us when we were lost. Glory be to God.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No VI.

JOHN NEANDER.

The following letter from my dear brother Neander, was written in German. From the similarity of names, it may be right to state, that he is not Dr. John Augustus Neander, the well-known historian. The author of this letter is now in America, endeavouring to impart the knowledge of the Saviour to our brethren in that country.

I would especially direct those who feel interested in the present religious state of the Continent of Europe, to observe what Neander says of the impressions made on his mind by his intercourse with German students of theology. My own recent experience abundantly confirms the truth of his statements as to the nature of the religious views prevalent among them.

My dear friend,

Cheerfully do I respond to your call, and as briefly as possible will I relate to you, how wonderfully God has dealt with me; how He, the Almighty God, looked down upon me,

while I was yet deeply sunk ; how He called me, and lifted me up from the dust ; and how He brought me out of darkness into his marvellous light ; praised be his name. Amen.

I was born in the year 1811, in Neubrûck, in the province of Posen ; my parents were strict Talmudical Jews, my father especially, a zealous, learned Talmudist. They had consecrated me to the office of a Rabbi, even while I was at my mother's breast ; which office being considered then, as it still is, a most holy vocation. On my having attained my 8th year, and being able to read Hebrew, my father engaged for me, a teacher of the Talmud, who resided in the house, and from early in the morning until late at night he laboured with me in the Talmud ; now and then he also read the Pentateuch and Jarchi's Commentary with me.

From my 14th, to my 23rd year, I studied at different Talmudical schools in Posen, and having attained to that degree which qualified me for the office of a Rabbi, I returned to my father's house, where I devoted myself entirely to the study of the Talmud. You are well acquainted with the course of life led at Rabbi-

nical schools, I have therefore no occasion to give you here an account thereof. I lived earnestly engaged in this study, because it was my parents' warmest wish; and I moreover hoped thereby to attain to a high position amongst my nation, and flattered myself that I should hereby be qualified for the community of the *Chasidim* and consequently to reach the presence of God.

I plunged myself into the deep labyrinth of Rabbinical subtleties and sophistry; entangled myself in a chain, composed of thousands of links of trivialities; exhausted myself in endeavouring to be enlightened on this, or on that matter; but I only got deeper and deeper into the labyrinth; not a ray of light penetrated its dark recesses. At length the employment became exceedingly disagreeable to me; the zeal which was so ardent in my youth, (alas! it was a blind zeal), cooled more and more in proportion as it became clearer to me, that the words of the different Rabbis, the former and latter, are truly not agreeable to God's most holy word; and I discovered, that the persuasion that their ways lead to the truth, is a vain persuasion.

I was about 25 years old when with a painful heart I perceived this. I had no firm foundation to rest upon; nothing on which to lay hold. I stood as on broken ground; my heart torn, and nigh to perish with anguish. About this time I was teacher in a town in Germany, where I had above twenty pupils, whom I had to educate, and bring up as men and Israelites; and every Saturday I had to deliver a public lecture on portions of the Old Testament. All this placed me in a terrible condition; I had to preach up and defend that, against which my heart revolted; dissemble I would not, yea, I could not.

In the early period of my life as a teacher, I was zealous for the Rabbinical Judaism of the present day. I tormented and exhausted myself endeavouring, by the works of the law, to lead a life pure and holy before my God; for even when a child, I conceived sin to be an abhorrence to God; the thunders of Sinai sounded and resounded in my heart; the mighty word proceeding out of the mouth of an Almighty God, "cursed is he who does not keep my law," pressed me down to the ground at that early period of my life; as with flaming

letters it was written in my heart, "God is a holy God! God is a righteous God! who abhors sin; in whose presence, none but those who are pure, and free from sin, and who live for him only, can abide." From all my toil, however, I found no peace; far, far from me was the rest for which I so much longed.

I had intercourse with a few individuals who called themselves Christians. I sought them out for the purpose of discussing with them scientific subjects, and now and then to study the Old Testament with them; of these some were students in theology, and others teachers; they used to assail the revealed word of God most terribly. Through them I became acquainted with the criticisms of de Wette, Eichhorn, Dinter, and others, and it was not long that I stood up a zealous defender of modern Judaism; I became a Rationalist. We are deceived! exclaimed I to my community, terribly deceived! the Talmud and the Psakim are a tissue of errors, and so forth. Still the storm in my heart did not subside; it continued to roar and to rage; I was not free; before it was chains of superstition that shackled my heart, now those of unbelief; chains forged by

profane hands, by such fools as say, "there is no God."

As I looked on these contradictions, and on this work of ungodly men, I trembled, and entered the field against these impudent denyers of God; but with weapons, alas! I knew not at that time, and so I was in a terrible condition. I felt as if closed in by a wall; I panted after the breath of life; I longed after liberty, and hoped that the enigma would solve itself; but far off appeared to me the hand which should lead me into the haven of peace; and the light which I searched after in all the writings of men, proved but darkness; they were broken cisterns, and my soul, which was languishing and nigh to perishing, did not find the water of life. I lay at times the whole night on the hard floor, chastised my body, yearned and cried aloud. The old Jews, to whose knowledge these austerities came, held me for a saint; and the modern Jews said to me: "Don't be a fool." Oh! these were years of anguish and terror; I was often nigh to despair. The compassion and grace of God, whom I did not know at that time, alone held me up; the hand of the mighty covenanted God of my

forefathers covered me, and it was his eternal love that preserved me from sinking.

I tore myself with force from the circle of those who surrounded me, and I was chiefly alone and secluded. I betook myself, as it were, to a desert of books. Alas! the speculations of men only filled my head, while my heart remained empty. My thirst after the truth, after God's truth, was not quenched; I read now and then in the Pentateuch; but the books of the Old Testament were locked up to me, and the old and new commentaries of the Rabbis did not satisfy me. That the New Testament is a key to the Old I had not the least conception at that time; and, as I was then an enemy to Christianity, I never read the New Testament.

At this time of severe struggle, I received a visit from my father, to whom I communicated my distress of mind; it pained him deeply, and he pressed me to return home with him immediately. To my question, "What shall I do then?" he replied, "you shall do nothing else but learn the *Torah*, you have no occasion to trouble yourself about earthly things, and as soon as you shall be seated in the circle of the

Chasidim and students of the law, it will be well with you." Family matters obliged my father to return quickly, and I begged him to allow me to remain for a short time longer in Germany, until I should be enlightened on that which distressed me so much. Shortly after that I was sent for by a Jewish community, in the north of Germany. I hurried thither with joy, where I took possession of a very pleasant post.

My heart, however, remained wounded, and peace was far from me. The Jews of that place are very indifferent about religion, and it was not required that I should deliver a public lecture on the Sabbath. I looked for religious men, but amongst the Jews there was not one in whom there was a striving after the only good; my exhortation to them to elevate themselves to the fulness which cometh from God, and my admonitions, were all in vain; nevertheless, the pupils clung to me with much love; and they listened to me attentively when I related to them the history of the kingdom of God in the time of the Old Testament dispensation.

But my heart continued cold even here; the

great deeds of God filled me with awe, and the history of our people, as well as my own course of life, only opened more the wounds of my heart. "The Balm of Gilead" I knew not, and the instruction I imparted was only mechanical, without life, and without warmth.

I visited the clergymen of this town, and I found some of them different from any I had seen before; they talked of the revealed word of the Old Testament, with warmth of heart and enthusiasm, and I heard for the first time a powerful testimony to the Christian doctrine; my whole heart was stirred up against it, the ground burned under my feet, and I hurried away purposing never to return again.

Still there remained a thorn in my heart. The liii. of Isaiah as well as other places in the Old Testament, to which my attention was drawn, were too strong for me; doubt raged in me, and the questions, what if it be really true? what if the Christians are right? left me no peace.

A few weeks elapsed, and I could no longer endure my trouble; I greatly desired to be enlightened, and that, by means of the common medium of all truth, holy writ alone.

I began to read the New Testament, and to compare it with the Old, and it wonderfully unfolded itself to me; more and more I discovered the great mystery of redemption. In the Old Testament, in all God's contrivances, a voice called to me, and I heard the voice of God, through Moses and the prophets, saying: Jesus Christ the crucified, is the true Messiah, the true Saviour, whose name is *Jehovah Zidkenu*, the Lord our righteousness. I was roused especially by the 9th chapter of the Acts; I was made acquainted, after much wrestling and fervent prayer, that Jesus, is the source of salvation, and of eternal life to all, who, by the efficacy of his blood, are cleansed from the guilt and pollution of sin, and through him can call God, Abba, Father. I perceived that faith on the triune God, is the victory which vanquishes the world.

I could not remain silent about this; my heart was filled with it; I tasted the friendship of God, I rejoiced and was constrained to exclaim, "my Redeemer liveth;" and this I announced to my pupils, talked of it in the circles of Jewish families, and publicly and aloud gloried in the ground of my hope in the rich

promise vouchsafed to me, by the mouth of a mighty covenant God: Be comforted, all thy sins are forgiven thee, thy debt is paid and annulled, through the great and only atoning sacrifice, through "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

There was a tremendous tumult among the Jews; some of them came to me, and gave themselves much trouble by various means to turn me away from the Lord, mine and my father's God. The community wrote all about it to my father, from whom I received a letter which placed me in a most painful position. He prayed and cried, "Come to us, and remain a Jew." My mother received from this news, a severe blow, and she was laid on a bed of sickness, and great were her sufferings; my sisters, brothers, and relatives mourned in secret. It was a hard struggle—life and death depended on my decision.

I cried and wept bitterly, and riveted myself firmly to the word of life, that alone should be my guide, my stay, and my staff; and praised be God, the Sun of righteousness lighted me, and his beams fell warm and full of life on my heart.

“Whoso loveth father and mother more than me, is not worthy of me;” this was spoken by Him who has power to save and to condemn. I could not do otherwise than obey Him, who once said to the patriarch Abraham, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.” I was obliged to tear asunder the ties which bound me to my beloved relatives, who still remain dear to me; painful as it is to flesh and blood, I was constrained to do so for the Lord’s sake; and I exclaimed aloud in the presence of the Jews who at this time surrounded me, and who, not knowing what they did, endeavoured to hurl me down to the abyss of destruction: “I cannot do otherwise, I must acknowledge Him, I must believe on Him, who is my Redeemer and Saviour; His name is Jesus Jehovah; I cannot do otherwise, should they on account of it cut me in pieces. Woe unto me, if I deny Him, the Lord Jesus; therefore it is well with me, that I perceived through the grace of God, that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, praised be His name. Amen.”

Now was I able to rejoice, and with David to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits," Psalm ciii. 2.

After I had been duly instructed in the saving truth of the gospel, I was publicly baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, on the 9th of December, 1839, by the Rev. Mr. Müller.

Yours, my dear friend, in the bonds of Christ,

JOHN NEANDER.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. VII.

HERMANN STERN.

The following narrative of Mr. Stern is abridged from his "Glaubensgründe für meinen Uebertritt zum Christenthum." All that portion has been omitted, which brings proofs from the Jewish prayer-book, and Rabbinical authors, that the more ancient Jews believed in a plurality of subsistences in the Godhead; because the sight of so much Hebrew is repulsive to the general reader; and this line of argument, though useful to a certain extent, is not such as to satisfy a mind really in earnest. What say the Rabbis? is a question of very inferior moment to the inquiry: What saith the revealed word of God?

SKETCHES OF MY HISTORY.

My father was Rabbi and Teacher of the Talmud at Prague, at Strakenitz, and somewhat later at Bamberg. I had the happiness to be instructed by him in the Bible and in the Talmud, from my tenth to my twenty-first

year, and during this period of eleven years, I also frequented some Christian schools. At the decease of my father, who died in his seventy-sixth year, duty no longer demanded my residence at Bamberg, and having applied to the then "Court Commission," [Hofcommission] at Wurtzburg, for the situation of Israelitish teacher at Höchburg, which was at that time vacant, I obtained it. The Jewish inhabitants of Höchburg were "pious," and previous to my coming there the children of the rich had been instructed by private tutors. But as the former had been unwilling, that the children of the less fortunate Jewish parents should share this instruction, these felt themselves obliged to petition the authorities for the appointment of a public teacher, which was answered, quite unexpected by the rich, by my installation. It was, therefore, to be expected that the wealthier Jews would not be pleased with the new school; and when at last the authorities would no longer suffer the private tutors to remain at Höchburg, obliging the rich Jews to send their children to the public school, the latter became to them an object of hatred. This hatred to the school was now

transferred to me, and I was persecuted in every possible way. The wealthier Jews complained of me, because I permitted the boys to sit bare-headed; because I kept no wash-basin in the school-room, and what gave me most trouble, though it was not raised into a point of accusation, because I had often inculcated the duty of love to Christians, whom the Shulchan Aruch* denominated idolators.

I endeavoured to conform in my religious instruction to the letter and spirit of the Holy Scriptures, and could not avoid alluding to the defectiveness and emptiness of the synagogue ceremonial, as taught in the Talmud and the Jewish code Shulchan Aruch.

This course was complained of before the Chief Rabbi of the district; and for my own security, I requested government that the Rabbi be instructed to superintend the religious instruction of my school, and to subject it to one or two examinations annually. Mr. Bing, the Chief Rabbi, however, begged to be excused from doing so, stating, that my religious instruction did not please him. The

* A Jewish code of laws.—ED.

government then demanded of the Rabbi either to propose one of the existing religious compendiums as a text-book for schools, or else to write one himself.

The Rabbi offered to do the latter. In the third year of my public services, the government sent me to the town of Heidingsfeld, and before leaving Höchburg, I received a testimonial from the royal school-inspection of the district, expressing the satisfaction my labours had given to the government.

I had been nearly two years in my school at Höchburg, when the government sent me, and all other Israelitish teachers of the kingdom, *the new text-book of the Mosaic religion* which the Rabbinical candidate, Dr. Alexander Behr, had written, under the surveillance and direction of the Chief Rabbi, Mr. Abraham Bing, and which the Rabbi at Fürth, and many other influential Jewish ecclesiastics had adopted; government signifying at the same time that it was the desire of his Majesty the King to have this book introduced in all Israelitish schools. I received joyfully this book, which promised to meet the urgent necessities of the schools. But I was doomed to severe disappointment; the

160 octavo pages which this volume contains, are almost entirely filled with ceremonial laws, treating of phylacteries, inscriptions, fringes, circumcisions, meats, the prohibition of shaving, the creed, &c. &c. Not a word, and much less an exposition of morality, of conscience, of virtue, of holiness, of the condition and destiny of man.

In that portion of the book which treats of God, there is an entire omission of his power, his wisdom, his goodness, mercy and holiness, and of all the lessons derived from these attributes and perfections. Not even the Decalogue has found a place in this work.

The Messiah, (as well as many other similar predictions) it explains to signify a *period of time* when all men shall know God and serve him.

I directed the attention of the government to this dead skeleton, showing that I could not receive this book as my guide in religious instruction. I prayed for permission to follow my own course of instruction, and pledged myself to have my lessons printed and submitted to the Chief Rabbi.

My petition was granted; this was the

beginning of trouble; and my book on the "Confirmation of Israelites" followed in 1829. It was the more gladly received by the public, since I confirmed all my positions by quotations from the Talmud, which I translated literally. The second volume, which I published in 1835, under the title of the "Tree of Life," was as kindly received. Both these books continue as standards in many schools of various countries, and prove that even the Talmudists of the third, fourth, and fifth centuries have drunk from the evangelical source of life. In like manner also, *the Confession of Faith of the Israelites*, as delineated in my works the "Confirmation," page 140—146, and the "Tree of Life," page 226—243, remain in full credit among the Jews to this day, nor have the Rabbis ventured to say ought against it, although it refers to the New Covenant both in the text itself and in the notes.

Five-and-twenty years have I been openly inculcating these principles in my schools and in the synagogues, and never have either the Israelitish deputies delegated by government to attend my public examinations, nor the great number of Israelites who assisted on such occa-

sions, uttered an objection; a proof this, that my religious principles were not a baseless fabric, or, as is too often the case in the statements of our Rabbis, the result of mere whim or conjecture.

The kindly, but often misconstrued feelings of his Majesty, Ludovic I. towards the Israelites of his realm, which had been manifested by his establishment of national schools for them, by the appointment of regularly educated Rabbis, the free admission of the Jews to all the existing Christian scholastic institutions, and the manifold favours enjoyed by Jewish mechanics, &c., were again shown in the year 1836, by his convoking of Jewish committees.

These consisted of Rabbis, Israelite teachers, and delegates of communities. They met in all the provincial capitals of the kingdom in the public edifices, where they held regular sessions, under the presidency of a royal commissary, to solve such questions in theological, scholastic, and social matters, as had arisen during the then contemplated Jewish emancipation; and to give government their advice.

One of the questions before the Committee

at Würzburg was — Whether the Jewish doctrines acknowledge or reject the belief in the Trinity, as contained in the Old Testament. The Rabbis consulted on this weighty point in private sessions, which I attended, having been chosen by a majority of votes as one of the referees; and they thereupon declared in the public session briefly that the doctrine of the Trinity is *not* contained in the Old Testament, on which account also the Jews did not acknowledge this doctrine.

The president then demanded that every one agreeing with the declaration of the Rabbis should rise. All the Rabbis, all the teachers, and all the delegates (116 individuals) arose. I only, remained sitting, and then handed to the president a written notice, stating that I should beg the Rabbis, in a circular which should be printed, to give me an explanation of various difficulties that I entertained on this point, before I could accede to the declaration made by them.

My circular, entitled “Israelitism in its Excellency and its Burden” (*Israelitenthum in seiner Würde und Bürde*) was printed during these sessions (which lasted six weeks), and

produced a universal sensation. The Rabbis took it very ill that I had ventured this step, notwithstanding I had been shown, as in a camera obscura, in glaring colours, my prospective misery; but they did not answer my circular. Only Dr. Romann, Chief Rabbi, (Land Rabbiner) at Cassel, and Mr. J. Heidegger, teacher of the Talmud, at Furth, wrote each one a sheet against me. Both of them, however, scarcely touched upon the point, and were contented with abuse, cursing, and persecution.

My school at Heidingsfeld was advised to institute a complaint against me, as having, through my circular, shaken the basis of my religion, and to found thereon a request for my removal. The government, however, declined entertaining the complaint; since, by issuing my circular, I had adopted the very course which the Rabbis themselves had pointed out when asked how a Jew should proceed in case that religious doubts should arise; since there was no supreme religious tribunal in existence to whom the case might be referred; the Rabbis having declared that in such an event a circular letter stating the

question should be addressed by the inquirer to all (Jewish) theologians.

These reasons were too weighty to encourage an appeal to the royal "Ministerium," although my opponents anticipated a favourable decision from this event for themselves, notwithstanding their unholy aim.

They, however, preferred to accuse me anew as having transgressed my religion, namely, by having taught in my schools that in case of necessity the Jews were permitted to break the laws relating to the Sabbath in order to relieve a fellow-man.

I was cited and heard, and having confessed the truth of the charge, *the royal "Ministerium" resolved on my penal removal to the school at Main-Stockheim.*

This severe penalty could not have been inflicted, if the Rabbis had not represented that Jews were not permitted to violate the Sabbatical laws in order to relieve a fellow-man.

I was therefore obliged to leave a town where so many persons and objects were dear to me, and where I had enjoyed that rare happiness of teachers, to instruct the children

of my former pupils. I was forced to leave two pretty little gardens which I had gradually raised on desert spots, and the trees which I had planted at the birth of each of my children.

I departed ; my wife and children followed me weeping, and the tears of many others comforted me.

In November, 1837, I arrived in the village of Mainstockheim, the place of destination, as the appointed Israelitish teacher of religion. The Jewish community belonged to the orthodox or pious class. I was shown to three small rooms as my residence, and their gloomy appearance was little calculated to cheer my mind.

I observed that this dwelling could not accommodate myself and family ; and begged the Jewish School-Community (Schulgemeinde) to grant me other rooms, or else to enlarge these ; but it was in vain. I was obliged to convert the lobby into a dormitory for my children. The little rooms, owing to their disproportionate loftiness, were cold and uncomfortable, and so damp that we had thick ice within, near the windows. My wife and some of my children fell sick ; and I felt my-

self obliged, and in duty bound, to petition the royal land-tribunal for enlargement of my dwelling, and my petition was shortly granted.

But the Jewish Warden appealed to a higher tribunal (the royal government); and when the former decision was confirmed, they appealed to the Ministerium. Much time was thus lost, and I obtained at last an additional room and a cellar.

My salary was so small that I had to live partly on my own means; and yet the Jewish School-Community withheld from me part of the amount of firewood granted me by law. Out of love of peace, I offered to relinquish part of the withheld quantity of wood, if they would but give the rest, so as to obviate the necessity of complaining to government; but I was forced to complain.

The suit passed again all the various counts as before, and was decided in my favour; the lawful quantity of wood was to be given me, and for that which had been unjustly withheld I was to be indemnified. Although I had declined to accept the indemnification granted me by law—a refusal very cheerfully accepted by my rich community—yet did they not

neglect to avenge themselves upon me in the way of piety; being aware that this was the likeliest way to compass their end. I was accused of the following sins, which I had actually committed.

1. That I had not only permitted my female scholars to come to the synagogue on Saturdays, but had commanded them to do so, in order to attend to the religious instructions which I there imparted.

2. That I had cut my beard in Omer.*

3. That, on one occasion, being called up to the reading of the Thora, I had appeared with gloves on.

4. That I kept a Christian servant.

5. That on the anniversaries of my parents' death, I did not lead the Synagogue service: and,

6. That, although I would not allow my wife to use the "dipping bath" (Tauchbad), I would persist in giving her my arm.

They stated that they could no longer suffer a man among them who is so immoral, so irreligious, and who excited so much scandal;

* The period between the Passover and the Feast of Weeks.

and since no Christian court could decide on these Jewish sins, it was requested that the Chief Rabbi should be heard, and that I should be discharged. I replied: and respecting the last two points on which most stress seemed to be laid, I observed first, that it had been my father's dying request that I should neither fast nor lead the synagogue service on the anniversaries of my parents' death, as the custom had originated in a superstition; and, secondly, that according to a medical testimonial which I laid before the court, my sick wife had been prohibited from using the "dipping bath;" but the decision of the Chief Rabbi was, that as I had confessed my wife neglected the bath, while, at the time, it was proved that she had taken my arm in walking, I was worthy of death according to Levit. xx. 18, and must be discharged from my office forthwith. I protested against this barbarous decision, and prayed to submit it to another Rabbinat. My petition was granted, but the Rabbi of the district, Mr. L. B. Bamberger, of Wurtzburg, declared that he fully agreed with the Chief Rabbi, and added *that my wife also was worthy of death.*

In consequence, I was discharged, lost the salary yet due to me, though government had approved of my official labours, and adjudged as having forfeited even my claim upon the States Institution for the relief of Orphans and Widows of German School Teachers, as well as my right to the 133 florins which I had already paid into that institution. With this bitter experience, and provided with most satisfactory testimonials from my immediate superiors, I left my native country, and went with my wife and children to the free town of Frankfort, where I enjoy perfect peace in the capacity of private tutor. From this brief sketch it will sufficiently appear that the Rabbinical Jewish religion leads to and justifies the most revolting injustice and cruelty, a reproach this which cannot be brought against Christianity. It will be vain to reply: "Christians have also committed many unjust things, and the Jews of Bavaria have remained too far behind the spirit of the day, and are, therefore, capable of many things, of which the better educated Jew would feel ashamed." I admit that many Christians have acted unjustly, but they never

did so in conformity with the principles and doctrines of Christianity. Christianity does not justify evil, but Rabbinical Judaism does.

The acknowledged principles of the latter scorn the Spirit of the age; nor can it be suffered to affect them so long as Judaism is to remain Judaism; a fact this which the great association of orthodox Rabbis, opposed to the more enlightened Rabbis, ever have endeavoured to prove, and are still continuing to do.* The enlightened Israelites cannot prove that the Talmudian Rabbinical Judaism (the Judaism of the Bible has ceased since the destruction of the second temple), is anything else than what it really is; but by their verbal and real opposition to it prove that it is good for nothing, *and that one is obliged to abandon it in order to be a rational and upright man.* It is only a pity that these men are generally wanting in reverence for divine religion in general, and in courage to profess Christianity, which I am deeply persuaded, and will maintain before God, is true Judaism.

* The learned Rabbi Hirsh, of Emden, writing against the Assembly of the Ref. Rabbis, says in No. 27 of the "Orient,"—"The Assembly has, in fact, renounced Judaism by renouncing the Talmud."

Whoever is not able to enter into the connection of divinely arranged relations of things, must needs contradict it and break it up. To such a mind is the revelation of the old as well as the new covenant, a subject vastly too much modified; as may be proved from universal history, and as has been amply proved by the memorable progress of Jewish history since the crucifixion of Christ, and the degeneracy of the Jewish religion into the chaos of Talmudical Rabbinism.

One may declaim, after one's own ideas or knowledge—on the one invisible and incorporeal Deity; on the precepts of universal morality; but such abstractions are neither revelation nor religion, and are at best merely views and scholastic opinions of religion.

To palm this off as the index and the essence of the Jewish religion, is to misrepresent it as far as it did possess historical meaning and significance.

The first volume of my periodical, "*Die Auferstehung*,"* proves sufficiently, without at all exhausting the subject, that the doctrine

* A weekly periodical, published by Mr. Stern, in 1844.—ED.

of the Trinity is not new in Judaism, however positively this is denied. And it may be proved, that it is precisely the groundless rejection of this dogma, which appears in all the writings of the Old Testament, that constitutes our greatest guilt, and brought about the denial and crucifixion of the Messiah.

This terrible blood-guiltiness which our ancestors have brought on themselves, and entailed on their descendants, the murder of the most righteous and most exalted Israelite whom the earth ever bore, the only sinless Son of God, is still resting upon us ; and must disturb every reflecting Israelite the more, since he cannot find peace within any other pale than that of Christianity, the true religion of Judaism.

But the credibility and truth of the fundamental dogmas of Christianity, in their identity with biblical Judaism will be seen in the following grounds of faith.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER.

Although I, who am a creature of the earth, endowed with limited powers of mind, am incapable of comprehending God, the only

One, the Eternal, the Almighty, the Invisible, the omnipresent Creator, the Governor and Ruler of the Universe; still millions of proofs convince me that He is the God and living Father of mankind, and, therefore, I believe it. He is the Father in a much loftier sense than I am able to comprehend; for my conceptions are imperfect and insufficient, when contemplating the inferior creation; how much more when judging of an order of beings higher than myself, or of the Most High, while the angels reply to the inquiry, "Where is the place of his glory?" only by "blessing Him." My ideas are borrowed from a *human father*, who, as I know by myself, is fallible, subject to passion, in every way limited and liable to sin. My confession of the Father is the amen from the depths of my heart. From this amen gushes forth my amunah (my faith); (Isa. lxx. 16.) a stream of sweet water, which satisfies my thirst, and waters the whole of the blessed inheritance which I have acquired according to the direction of my Lord for ever. I believe in God the Father, the first and only source of created beings, which He preserves, which He suffers to die, and to re-appear in

new forms and for new purposes. I believe in God, the Father of His only begotten Son, the Messiah, whom He has begotten from His own essence from all eternity.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE SON.

All men are called by their Creator to be holy, even as He is holy. The duty of complying with it, every man who will use his reason must feel. It was especially shown in Israel — Israel would not hear the Lord Himself, and He acquiesced in this by His holy decree made known in the beginning—viz., to lead and to save mankind by Him who is sent from God; for man cannot see God himself. (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) Moses was guided by the Messenger of God (the Malach), and all the sacred books testify of him. This Messenger of God, the Messiah, is the heart of the religious organization; every man has need of it, without it there is no life in him. All the books of the Old Testament carry the life and blood to the heart; and all the books of the New Testament eject it from the heart throughout the body. The Messiah came at the time appointed, and in the appointed manner. God

with us (Immanuel), the Prince of Peace, the Angel, God, are the names given to him by the Bible; and the Jews called him "Salvation" (Joshua-Jesha). It was his province to enunciate clearly the eternal rules of life, to redeem mankind from its apostacy, to transform it into a holy Israel, to establish a kingdom of heaven where all who have erred may be received unto liberty and peace. The Jews of antiquity hailed the Messiah, and at His entry in Jerusalem, cried to Him, Hosanna (save us); but they afterwards denied Him, notwithstanding all the proofs of His faithfulness. The Jews of the present day, by their manner of life and their many prayers, *confess* the truth of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith and of the divine nature of the Messiah. And yet they deny Him without any other reason than their blind obstinacy. They even confess the resurrection of Christ, ascribing, however, this sublime phenomenon (which occurs also twice in the old covenant) to the powers of the Shem-hamphorash, which they at the same time define to be the belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and yet — deny. The precepts of the Thora (the five books of

Moses) were considered by the Jews of all ages as divine; and they are divine, but ennobled and fulfilled by the Messiah.

But if Christ be denied, and not acknowledged as the promised Messiah, then the precepts of the Thora remain what they were—viz., a collection of symbols—which, the moral precepts excepted, are no longer of any application. Even the Mosaical moral laws would appear imperfect on this supposition; for in them man is valued at the price of gold; the Israelite is brother only to the Israelite; vengeance is permitted, &c. &c. It is on account of the inapplicability and the imperfection of these laws that Judaism has grown poor and worthless; Rabbis will stand opposed to Rabbis as of yore, and Judaism has degenerated into a most unreasonable and impotent rabbinical mechanism, according to which, as has been shown, a man is sentenced to die who will not be as inhuman as Judaism would have him. But the doctrine of the new covenant—i. e. of the Messiah—which is truly Israelitish, testifies, by its divine origin, to its eternal truth by that universal love, loyal to God, and redeeming the world, which forms the focus

into which all its rays are drawn. Here you behold a doctrine which rouses the mind, a moral which affects and wins the heart. Here is a just delineation of the human being in its perfection; power and tenderness, justice and compassion, vivacity and calmness, clearness and depth, the simplicity of a child and wisdom profound, elevation and familiarity, in wonderful harmony; no loop-hole or hiding-place for the ungodly.

Therefore I believe in God the Son; therefore I must believe in Him. I believe in Him as the Messiah, bringing happiness and salvation to the human being, without whom the Holy Scriptures would be a compound of untruths; without whom God could not be God.

I believe in God the Son, because the Holy Scriptures of the old covenant point continually to Him; because they command us to kiss the Son, that we may not go astray, proclaiming salvation to all those who put their trust in Him. (Ps. ii. 12.) I believe in God the Son, because His death, as well as His life, was a resurrection, and faith in Him promises a resurrection, a new birth unto God.

God the Son will build the holy temple on

earth. Without faith in Him life is a sepulchre; without it man is capable of worshiping wood and stone; capable of calling the believer a worshipper of idols, and to be cold to those whom he should meet with gratitude and devotedness.

The death of the Son, David sung in his Psalms (Ps. ix. x.); therefore I rejoice in Him and shout for joy: of Him is my song in the great congregation, and I pay my vows in the presence of those that fear Him. (Ps. xxii. 26.)

"Thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou satest in the throne judging right." (Ps. ix. 4, &c.) Thy omnipotence, Thy doctrine, the power of Christianity, has preserved me to eternal life, and has protected me in hours of temptation. How very easy was it not made for me to have betrayed Thee! If I had but risen from my seat I should have been a traitor. The Levites persecuted me, and have condemned me to death; but thanks unto Thee, O my salvation, Thou hast led me through fire and through water, and hast preserved me. I will no longer remember the past, nor the old; for Thou hast created new things. It shoots forth even now, will ye not perceive it? (Isa. xlviii.) My strength and my

whole life shall henceforth be devoted unto Thee, O my God. My sufferings never can become so great that Thy example should not afford me comfort and relief. Be therefore still my Guide, my Beacon-light in the dangerous voyage of life.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT.

If we reflect on the essence and the working of the Holy Spirit, as delineated in the Old Testament writings, as far as God has given us the ability to do so, and as far as it appears to be necessary for the regulation of our conduct, the conviction gains upon us afresh, that the gospel, or the glad tidings of the Messiah, contains divine oral laws, and the application of the written doctrines.

When it is said in Gen. i. 2, the Spirit of Elohim (plural) moved on the face of the water, or when he said to Moses (Num. xi. 17), "I will take of the Spirit that is on thee and put it upon them," or in ver. 25, They prophesied as long as the Spirit was on them, but no longer, it must appear to every candid mind that by the Spirit of God is not meant a mere influence, but a real, active being; for to say

that an influence was moving over the water, to pass upon one person while leaving another, to *rest for a time* upon certain individuals, is absurd.

In Exod. xxviii. 3, we read : God has filled those who were wise (meek) in heart with the spirit of wisdom, but that this spirit (1 Sam. xv. 21—26), has *left* the king Saul, because he feared God less than the people ; which believed, as they still do, that God loved sacrifice more than mercy. (1 Sam. xvi. 14.)

But that which comes and goes pre-supposes something which does not only enlighten the spirit of man (for this might be done by study and intercourse with the learned), but something which does purify and lift up even the less enlightened beyond the boundaries of man.

The Spirit of God, when it entered the heart of man, rendered him "another man" (1 Sam. x. 6) ; so that the human spirit disappears when God pours out his spirit upon man. (Joel ii. 28, 29.)

The Holy Spirit is not *produced* by the power to prophecy, but, on the contrary, he, as a self-existing Being, produces this power.

As it is said of Saul: the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophecy. The Holy Spirit, therefore, and the power to prophecy, stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect.

Now, then, it is the Holy Spirit, and not mere enlightenment, which enables us to walk in the laws of the Lord, in giving us a new heart and a new spirit, differing in its aspirations from those of man at large. (See Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) The Spirit of the Lord, moreover, gives us the spirit of (true) wisdom and the spirit of (true) understanding; the spirit of counsel and of might, the spirit of the (true) knowledge and of the (true) fear of the Lord. (Isa. xi. 2.) It is admitted that the mind of the human being is a spirit from the Lord; but the self-existing Holy Spirit must animate and guide the mind, or else it will be led into error; for when the Spirit of the Lord left Saul, an evil spirit troubled him.

It is only when we seek by repentance and faith, the outpouring of the spirit of grace and supplication, and when looking up to him whom we have pierced, and mourning for him as one that mourneth for an only son, and

being in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born; that God will take away out of the land the false teachers (who would explain away the Messiah) and the impure spirit. (Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 2).

Kimchi and Rashi, the two great leaders of the Jewish mind, confess (Comment. on Num. xii. 2) that "the Spirit is speaking;" thus showing that it is not an influence which obliged the prophets to speak, but that the words of the prophet were the words of the Holy Spirit—hence of self-existing, intelligent personality—and not of a lifeless and unintelligent power. But the leaders of Israel are his destroyers, (Isa. x. 1—4, and many other places), by denying the self-existing Spirit in God; thus provoking Him against themselves, and against us if we follow them. (Isa. lxiii. 10).

My belief in God the Holy Spirit is, therefore, formed alone on the Old Testament; I believe in him, and confess that he, with the Father and the Son, is the true and only God; of like essence with them, not created, but going forth from the Father and the Son. I believe in God the Holy Spirit, as animating

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all the regenerate, and as purifying and sanctifying them more and more daily while walking with God ; thus enabling them to serve God with increasing righteousness and holiness. I believe in God the Holy Ghost that he will fill the hearts of the faithful with peaceful assurance and firm confidence, to transform them into children of God, and to exalt them far above the men of the world.

I believe in God the Holy Spirit as sanctifying and governing, not only the individual members, but also the whole church united—all the members, but one body—through Christ the atoning Saviour; the most exalted Israelite after God's own heart.

I believe that He, the Holy Spirit, will also enlighten and animate my poor Israelitish brethren, to embrace the immoveable and saving truths of the gospel, so that they may pray with a true heart.

Elohim Zebaoth ! return, we beseech Thee ; look down from heaven and behold and visit this vine ; and the vineyard which thy right hand has planted, and the Son whom thou madest strong for thyself. Let Thy hand be still upon the man of Thy right hand, upon

the Son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself. So will we not go back from Thee. Awaken us, O Lord, and we will call upon Thy name. Turn us again, O Triune (Jehovah Elohim) God. Cause Thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

I BELIEVE IN THE TRIUNE GOD.

The writings of the Old and New Covenant in commanding me to worship God in a Trinity, do not thereby mean to shew me *what God is*, for how could I, poor worm of the dust, comprehend this? But their design is, to teach me here how to worship Him: I am told to worship Him as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Our impressions respecting the unity of God are not impaired thereby, but it is propounded in the manner in which the divine doctrines would have us to receive it. God would be to us not only a Creator, but a Father. Should we refuse to be His faithful children?

He is all men's Father, yet He is not comprehended alike, not loved alike, not worshipped alike by all. We Israelites are especially called, commanded, and in duty bound,

to love God our Elohim, with our whole soul, mind, and strength; God's parental love to us, most undeserving, passes all conception. Above and beyond all the other blessings which flow upon us in common with other human beings, God appeared to us as Man, the Son of God, to unite Himself unto us! The Word became flesh, and dwelt and walked among us. In the Son we behold the Father, and round us streams His glory when we unite ourselves to Him. The chasm that separated the creature from the Great Infinite has disappeared. The Son who has come forth from the Father, knows the will of the Father, and He has no other will than this. He is the sublimest pattern to us, because every man is called to enter through Him into filial relation with God. He is the substitute, the Saviour, the benefactor, the Son of God, the Son of Man. From Father and Son proceeds the Holy Spirit, who is to make us perfect. Through the Gospel He breathes in us as the teacher, the comforter, and the helper. A few traces of Him may be found even in the Talmud, but they are discovered with difficulty amidst the vast rubbish of useless discussions upon the ritual.

The Holy Spirit enlightens the soul, purifying it and making it to rejoice. It is he who makes us the children of God, and comes to all who seek God with their whole heart.

We worship the one only God in the Father, Son, and Spirit; whoever desires only one of these, will not acknowledge and adore Him in the manner in which He has manifested Himself to us, in which it is our duty to receive Him. Such an one is rebellious against God and willfully opposes Him.

The rabbinical age forsook spiritual Judaism, which was yet engaged in a religious struggle for development, adhering merely to the dead and killing letter, and made *that* its exclusive subject of discussion. They arranged "precept upon precept, line upon line, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little," without any regard to the irresistible and propelling power of history; and the religion which was to teach the redemption of the world through the Messiah, was reduced to be the handmaiden of insignificant traditions.

This terrible degeneration of true religion, effected by the guilt of man—these glaring contradictions in the lecture-room of divine

truth, must excite a deep indignation in the heart of all who feel the high calling of their existence. But these circumstances make it also a holy duty in every Israelite to throw off the degrading cap and bells of rabbinical self-righteousness; and, according to the claims of morality, of life, of the family, of the country, and of society at large, to choose, instead, the diadem of faith in the Saviour, "the Holy One of Israel;" and, by embracing the truth as it is in Jesus, to remove himself from the dreary dungeon of rabbinism, into the illuminated temple of the Messiah, which alone is the safe and sufficiently spacious place of refuge for the whole human race.

The embracing of Christianity is the only condition of our salvation—the key to the proper understanding of our sacred Scriptures, of our prayers, and of the many instructions of Jewish commentators on the Holy Trinity: it is the solution of the problem, why God is so much displeased with us—why he condemns us—and why the word of God calls upon us *to plead with our mother*. Long before the appearance of "the Holy One of Israel," of the only and true Messiah, have the biblical

teachers of the old covenant already taught and practised divine adoration to the Saviour, and have sung hymns to the Son of God. We *must* do the same, if it is not to be said of us *for ever*, that we "travail with iniquity, have conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood."

CONCLUSION.

Faithful to these incontrovertible principles, I have renounced Judaism and embraced Israel's true religion—Christianity; my conscience was not sufficiently large for all the errors that give existence and continuance to Judaism. The ceremony of my baptism was very edifying: Mr. F.'s preceding explanation of its import, and of man's continual struggle with the serpent, was well calculated to arouse the serious attention of every one present. That my religious conduct was sincere and consistent, and that I was not influenced by any impure motives, the Rev. Mr. F. proved from the concurring principles laid down in my work, called "Confirmation;" which pamphlet was printed eighteen years ago. I felt myself penetrated with a feeling of the deepest gratitude towards my God and Saviour, for the gracious assistance with which

he conducted and preserved me in my sorrowful path, and so mercifully sustained me until this day. I now feel satisfied in the consciousness of fulfilled duty; and, having proved the lawfulness and the necessity of my step from the Holy Scriptures, &c., I have reason to hope, that no impure motives will be ascribed to me by my late fellow-believers. Had I been influenced by the prospect of temporal advantages, I would not have deferred embracing Christianity until the sixtieth year of my life; for that is certainly not the age in which people endeavour to make their fortune. He who confounds the higher wants of the mind with the temporal wants of the body, knows neither his destination nor his calling, nor his dignity, and profanes the divine nature of religion. I live in the hope, that He who has called me and mine into life, will also be pleased to give us the means of subsistence. Many estimable Israelites, both learned and unlearned men, have fulfilled a similar duty before me, without giving the slightest occasion for suspecting them of impure motives. Such events ought to serve the mass of the Jewish nation as a guide in their own conduct; since the

most of them are, either from ignorance, or from an exclusive attention to their business, or from prejudice, or from indifference, totally unacquainted with the true position of Judaism, and with the spirit of religion in general. If we do not seek our salvation in Christianity, our hope is an empty bubble. Our task is, as the holy language indicates, *to seek the future in the past*. Without Christianity, biblical Judaism is indeed an illegible document; while rabbinical Judaism is a false and interpolated one. Both present a cloudy sky, without a sun sufficiently strong to protect us from the frost of the winter. The artificial lights of Judaism show only forms without meaning and truth—shadows without substances; and are nothing but deceptive *ignes fatui*, which lead the timid and confused wanderer from the right path, disappear, and leave him in the mire. The subject is too important to turn from these reflections with indifference. Certain it is, that to embrace Christianity does not mean to forsake, but to understand our religion; while to adhere to Judaism merely for the purpose of preserving a mummy of former ages, at the same time that the word of God is disregarded

—that indeed would be knowing our Creator in order, designedly, to rebel against him.

And now farewell, my Jewish brother, and be happy, if thou canst be so, within thyself and within Judaism. I renounce Judaism, because it affords no safety to Israel (Micah ii. 1, 2; vii. 1—7; Isa. v. 8; Jer. ix. 2—5; Zeph. iii. 4.), and because the latter can *only then* look forward for help, when *all* will turn to the Lord, and worship him in spirit and in truth. I shall devote myself to thy affairs, as long as the Lord will preserve my life and my reason. Faithful to my duty, I shall continue to show thee the danger of thy illness, as well as the best means for thy recovery; for *I dare not be indifferent to the danger of my brother*. But thou must also use the tried remedies, if they are to have any effect; to reject them from obstinacy, is unwise and sinful. I present thee with the same invitation that I have myself received from our Heavenly Father. Let us strive, then, together, to be dead to sin and trespasses, and to devote ourselves to holiness and to virtue. Let us confess that sin has been a murderer from the beginning, and that man can never be his own deliverer.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No VIII.

SHALOME.

I have selected the two following Witnesses, as being not only interesting in themselves, but as giving evidence of the unity of Christian experience in all ages. Shalomé and John Xeres were converted to the faith of Christ nearly a century and a half ago; they were surrounded by circumstances widely differing from those of the present day; yet the mental struggles of the one, and the intellectual difficulties of the other, were precisely the same as those of their more modern brethren. Our Jewish brethren will observe that these men were led to embrace the faith of Jesus Christ, a hundred years before "Conversion Societies" were thought of.

The account of the conversion of Shalomé, notwithstanding its faults of style, and occasionally injudicious mode of expression, is both interesting and instructive. It is an instance of the too common, and melancholy fact, that the conviction of the understanding is not necessarily followed by the surrender of the heart to God; and that neither Jew nor Gentile is made a Christian merely by

being baptized. And while I disclaim all intention of setting up a standard of Christian experience, I would affectionately intreat those of my baptized brethren who seem to have found it a very easy matter to embrace Christianity, who, as they have themselves told me, consider having "got through the *Catechismus*," a sufficient preparation for baptism, to study the mental conflicts of poor Shalome; and to be assured, that though it may not be needful they should suffer all his terrors, yet that they know nothing of true Christianity, if they do not understand somewhat of his self-abasement and deep conviction of sin.

Mr. Humphrey, the minister of the church in Rosemary-lane, observes, respecting the subject of the following narrative, "I have had a considerable acquaintance with Mr. Shalome, and I must needs say, I think he hath given as uncontrollable a proof of God's dealings with his soul, by way of conversion, as any one I have conversed with since I came into the ministry. I have observed a true strain of faith to run through his discourse, and he hath given me sufficient reason to conclude that he is a stronger believer than most of us Gentiles. The conversion of this individual is an encouraging presage of the happy re-ingrafture of the Jews into their own olive tree; an event witnessed by the Word of God, and confirmed to us by this unusual act. By the one he has declared what he will do, and by the other what he can do. And as the word of promise may encourage us to pray, so this instance of divine power to hope, that God will cause breath to enter into those dry bones, that they may live."

A NARRATIVE OF THE CONVERSION OF SHALOME
BEN SHALOMOH, GIVEN TO THE CHURCH OF
CHRIST, ASSEMBLED AT THEIR MEETING-
HOUSE IN ROSEMARY LANE, SEPTEMBER
29TH, 1699.

I hope, men and brethren, that what I am about to say may prove as effectual as the sermon which Peter preached to the men of Judea and Jerusalem, at the hearing of which there was a universal crying out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 37.) If that be your inquiry, take Peter's answer, "You must believe and be baptized, that the Holy Ghost may come upon you." (ver. 18.)

I, Shalome Ben Shalomoh, was born of Jewish parents, my father's name Shalomoh, my mother's Leah; was circumcised the eighth day in Pusnouny, in Poland, where I lived till I was twelve years of age; at which time it pleased God (who works all things for the good of his elect) that all our family, myself alone excepted, died from a great plague, which had universally spread itself through that land. Being left thus destitute, I had an inclination to travel, and in my travels, a boy, who was in the Duke of Brandenburg's army,

came and said to me, "Why do you not turn a Christian?" "A Christian," said I, "why, think you I will worship images?"—for such was my ignorance, that I thought all Christians were Papists, there being none but Papists who were called Christians in the country where I was born—"Do you," said I, "believe the Bible, the Old Testament, the five books of Moses, the Psalms of David, and the Song of Solomon?" "Yes," said he, "we have all these." "Do you," said I, "worship images?" "There are," said he, "two sorts of Christians, Protestants and Papists; we believe no other Saviour but Jesus Christ alone." "Well," said I, "carry me to a minister." He accordingly brought me to the Duke of Brandenburg's minister, who opened to me something concerning Jesus Christ, from the five books of Moses; as, first, that in Gen. iii. 15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;" which appeared to me, when God opened my eyes (for I could not see it before), a lively representation of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; as also from that in

Num. xxi. 9, when God commanded Moses to lift up a brazen serpent on a pole, that every bitten Israelite, looking thereto, might be healed, did I learn that Jesus Christ was the true brazen serpent, by believing on whom alone it was that I could obtain salvation and eternal life. He also endeavoured to show me how that many of the Psalms were prophetic of Jesus Christ, particularly Ps. ii. 7, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." And Ps. cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand," &c. And Ps. xxii. 16, 17, 18, "The assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet, I may tell all my bones, they look and stare upon me, they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture;" which did to me clear up something of what Jesus Christ underwent as he stood surety for His elect. From Isa. ix. 6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." I learned something of the human nature of Jesus

Christ. He also endeavoured, from Gen. i. 2, **רוח אלהים מרחפת על פני המים** "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," to evince to me the being of the Holy Ghost. The notion of a Trinity I took in from Gen. i. 26, "Let us make man;" and from Gen. xi. 7, when God, coming down to see the city and tower which the children of men had built, saith, "Go to, let us go down and confound their language." From Gen. xlix. 10, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come," &c. I saw that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah, in which I was satisfied; and though as yet I had nothing more than the notion of things, yet, as the eunuch said to Philip (Acts viii. 36), so said I, "What hinders me to be baptized?" And baptized I was, in Berlign, in Brandenburg, and the Duke stood my godfather. I became not a Christian for silver or gold, but was constrained thereto by the mighty power of Jesus Christ. I was beholden to none, but to the almighty power God. After this I was recommended to a minister in the city of Ryneburg, on the Rhine, by whom I was farther notionally confirmed in

the Christian faith ; and from that time I had a mind to travel into England ; where, under the denomination of a Christian, I lived a great while, revelling in all manner of wickedness, committing iniquity with greediness. As I grew older, I thought it was high time to reform, knowing I must give an account of deeds done in the body. I then resolved to lead a new life, and venture on the mercy of Christ, which, though I prayed for night and day, yet I could not find it. I made many resolutions to live better, and broke them as fast, knowing nothing of the person of Jesus Christ ; at length, I was, by continued prayer, very solicitous for repentance ; yet, thought I, should I repent, it will not avail me unless I could forsake my sins ; to prayer I went, and in agony I was ; I flung up mine eyes and heart to heaven. " Lord Jesus Christ," said I, " though thou wilt not show mercy to me, though I must perish, yet will I trust thee still." Terrors of conscience still pursued me, so that I often thought, through want of ease in my conscience, though I should trust in Jesus Christ, yet I should be damned. I thought many times, as I passed over the fields, that

I saw the Lord Jesus Christ coming in the clouds; upon which, when I began to consider my own condition, I passed judgment on myself as one that deserved hell and damnation. I found, as I thought, the devil binding me in chains, which made me cry out, as Rom. vii. 23, 24, "I am carried into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The terrors of hell took hold of me, I thought I saw the pit of hell ready to receive me. How to get peace of conscience I knew not; nothing but hell and damnation sounded in mine ears. I thought I must be damned if I turned not to Jesus Christ. In these agonies of spirit I read once and again the book of one Baxter, which I thought would have been a great means of my salvation. But, alas! that drove me more into hell; I thought I should by it have sunk into utter despair. I could find nothing in it for my consolation. What course to take I knew not. I desired the Lord Jesus to do a miracle upon me, in breathing the breath of life into my soul, which was dead in sin, as He formerly raised those who were naturally dead from their graves. I

pleaded His power, as he in Matthew viii. 2, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" and cleansing I stood in need of, for I saw my sin so black, that I abhorred myself in dust; I thought I was not worthy to roll myself on Jesus Christ; yet I resolved to venture, I knew I could but be rejected, as 2 Kings vii. 4, "If we say we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we shall die also; now, therefore, come, and let us fall into the host of the Syrians, if they save us alive, we shall live, and if they kill us, we shall but die." I always concluded prayer after this manner, "Lord, though thou wilt not hear me, yet will I trust to thee." I prayed (as one sensible of my own insufficiency) that God would by His Spirit teach me to pray. There was yet a secret hope in me that God would call me. However, I resolved to lean on the Lord Jesus, praying that He would give me the spirit of Him that raised Jesus Christ from the dead, to raise me from the death of sin; such was my affection to Jesus Christ, that I often wished myself in a cave, so that I might enjoy Him, though I endured the greatest hardship.

In these conflicts of spirit the devil set in upon me, told me, "it was impossible for me to be saved;" "for," said he, "your parents have wished a curse upon you;" and insinuated, as if I was by that curse bound over to eternal damnation. "How," said he, "can you believe that the Son of God should be born of the Virgin Mary? or that he who was born of her, should be the Saviour of your soul? Know you not what a *fellow* (which word went through my soul) God knows he was?" "It is impossible," said he, "that he should ever save you." To whom I answered, and said, "Satan, get thee behind me: God," said I "and the Lord Jesus Christ are both one; God at first created the world out of nothing, created man out of the dust, and of a rib taken out of Adam made He a woman; yea, Christ Himself was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Virgin Mary: and now, O devil, what is too hard for such an Almighty power which has done all this? Thou hast no power over Him, nor can'st thou disannul what He hath done." After this, my inclination stood bent to frequent the assembly of God's people; though whither to go I was at a loss.

I heard there were many churches; one cried, "Here is Christ;" another cried, "Here is Christ!" I knew there was but one Christ, however; and I thought I would associate myself with a sober people; at length I went among the Quakers, but alas! there I found nothing to my satisfaction, so that I was at a loss again; and so continued for many years, going nowhere, but lived without Christ, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger to the covenants of promise, without God in the world. At last my heart began to burn within me; whither, thought I, shall I go? I prayed that the Lord, if He had any love to me, would show Himself to me in Jesus Christ (for I always did, even when I lived in the flesh, as many nominal Christians do, look for God in the face of Jesus Christ), and point me out a way. At length I came to White-chapel, where my apprehensions concerning my state were dreadful. I went one night to bed, and there thought I heard a voice, distinctly saying, "Arise, arise; if you look not about you, and repent not, you must certainly be damned." This was a sad sermon preached to me, which, from a slavish fear and dread,

drove me to worship God, not from a sense of His love, but as I said, from a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation: my very heart trembled within me! "Lord!" thought I, "it is high time to repent; what shall I do?" Meeting a young man, I told him my sad condition. He told me, "Unless I was born again of the Spirit, I could not enter into the kingdom of God." This new birth was altogether a mystery to me. "What shall I do, then?" said I. I fell to weeping. "Pray," said I, "help me to a minister—a good gospel minister." I prayed many times that God would direct me to a right church, though with never so much affliction, the Head whereof is Christ. I have often seen, as I thought, Jesus Christ perfectly at the right hand of God. He brought me to a gospel minister, to whom I declared my mind, who went evangelically to work with me; he went far beyond Baxter. Baxter drove me back; but this gentleman told me there was free grace for all that came to Jesus Christ. This proved a happy day to my soul: he told me the Lord accepts Jew and Gentile, as in Gal. iii. 28. "There is neither Jew nor Greek,

there is neither bond nor free, their is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Jesus Christ." After some discourse with Mr. Humphrey, who made some discovery to me of God's way of salvation by free grace, of the way of the work of the Spirit of God on the spirit of a man, in raising him up from the death of sin, I read in a book in which I found the citation of that Scripture (John xvii. 26), "Father, I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." And, thought I, now there is an open door to come to God through Jesus Christ: it came on my soul with such power, that it appeared to me as if a door had been set open for any to enter in who will, how abominably vile and filthy soever they be. I thought I saw Jesus Christ, yea, the very Godhead shining round about me, through the manhood of Jesus, for in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. (Col. ii. 9.) And now I am persuaded, whether I direct my prayer to God the First Person in the Trinity, or to Jesus Christ the Second, it is the same; they being the same in essence, equal in power and glory.

As I was reading the book referred to above, it pleased God to dart in a beam of divine love in Jesus Christ on my soul ; though, for about an hour and a half, my bed shook under me. I quivered and trembled, and thought my very heart was broken within me. " Lord," thought I, " what shall I do to be saved ?" But it was soon cleared up to me by the Spirit of the Lord, that I should be saved by Jesus Christ, and Him alone ; and I am sure there is salvation in no other than in Jesus Christ ; no, there is not. And now I would give my body to be burned ; yea, had I a thousand lives, I would lay them all down, rather than be an unbelieving Jew ; for, saith Christ, " If ye believe not that I am he (*i. e.* the Messiah), ye shall die in your sins—and whither I go ye cannot come." (John viii. 21, 24). This is a miserable sentence to all unbelievers. I often wondered when I heard ministers pray for unbelieving Gentiles ; surely, thought I, the Gentiles all believe in Jesus Christ. But alas ! believing is quite another thing than I took it to be, a thing of far greater difficulty than most are aware of : he that comes to God must believe that he is every way such as the Scripture

declares Him to be. (Heb. xi. 6.) He must believe that all His attributes are highly exalted, and infinitely advanced in our salvation; that the law is much more highly magnified and made honourable (Isa. xlii. 21), by the obedience of Jesus Christ, God and man, than it could possibly have been by the perfect obedience of sinless Adam; he must believe, that what Christ has done and suffered for us, as our surety, in our room and stead, is the only righteousness whereby we are justified before God, and accepted with Him; and that this very righteousness becomes ours, pleadable by us by virtue of God's divine act of imputation, Jesus Christ being all in all. (Col. iii. 11.) But, alas! by how few are these gospel mysteries really and truly believed? I am one in whom the Covenant of Abraham is fulfilled, as it is in all those who believe in Jesus Christ. But if you do not believe, you must die in your sins. I am afraid that my forefathers, (though I must judge as charitably of them as I have warrant for), yet I fear lest many of them are gone down to the pit of eternal destruction; and yet I am "a brand plucked out of the fire." (Zach. iii. 2.) Now if God saved not his

own covenant children, his own spouse, those who were naturally in the root, what will become of those who are grafted in, and yet believe not that Jesus is the Christ? (1 John ii. 22.) But I know, and am persuaded, "That Jesus Christ loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20), which is the main point; and that by His death and resurrection my soul is saved.

I see that Jesus Christ, as He is God, is my Father; but as man, He is my elder brother. It hath pleased God to discover to me something of the glory of that covenant that he made with Abraham.* (Gen. xvii.) I am

* Inattention to the nature of the Abrahamic Covenant has been an occasion of much error respecting the state of the people of God under the Old Testament dispensation. Those of the ancient Hebrews who were taught of God, could see through the temporal economy of the Law, and distinguish those eternal rewards of faith, which were promised to the Patriarchs before the civil establishment of their nation in the land of Canaan, when the favourites of God were led about from place to place, as pilgrims and strangers upon earth.

If by the *Laws of Moses* we understand the whole revelation contained in the Pentateuch, it certainly presents us with *two different forms* of theological polity;

assured it is a covenant of grace, ratified and confirmed in the blood of Jesus. God hath given Himself to me in absolute covenant made with Abraham, and to my seed as a part of me. When I take the Lord's supper in faith, I see that, as really as the bread is broken, and the wine poured forth, the body of Christ was broken, and His blood poured forth for the remission of my sins. When I recollect my former state, that when I lay in my blood, and was led captive by sin—when I thought not on Jesus Christ; yea, before I was born, Jesus Christ thought of me, and laid down His life for me, and made satisfaction for my sin; when, I say, I consider these things, I am made to pray

under the *former* of which, the servants of God were trained up to a spiritual life of faith and hope, through a course of peregrination and persecution; but under the *latter*, they were exercised with a temporal settlement, and a ceremonial ritual. The former law of faith, as is argued (Gal. iii. 17), could not, however, be made of none effect by the law of ceremonies which came after: and the Jew who did not understand both, and think himself bound to follow both, had no right to call himself a disciple of Moses.—ED.

for the spirit of praise, that I may glorify God for ever, who by the riches of His grace hath brought me in, as the first-fruits of that great harvest of the Jews: when a nation shall be born in a day.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. IX.

JOHN XERES.

The following address to the Jews labours under the disadvantage of being given in detached extracts, forming together not more than a fourth part of the original volume. Part of the omitted portion consists of a line of argument that has been much more ably handled by others, and the remaining part consists of those erroneous views of the future destiny of Israel and of the earth, which the author learnt from his Gentile instructors. The book is dedicated to the then Archbishop of York, (in 1709), and prefaced by an attestation to the respectability of the author by seven London merchants, and another by the learned Dr. Allix. The dedication I omit; but retain the two quaint certificates. Would that my baptized brethren could always produce such satisfactory credentials!

“We, whose names are underwritten, merchants trading into Barbary in Africa, do hereby certify, all whom it may concern, that

we, each of us, having formerly lived for several years in those parts, did then, as we do now, personally know Jonah Ben Jacob Xeres, who was born in Saphia, a sea-port town on that coast. His parents, being Hebrews, were reputed to be honest and substantial people; who employed much care in educating this their son, Jonah, in the Jewish religion, and no less expense in instructing him in the Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldean tongues. He the said Jonah lived in that country a professed Jew, till the age of five and twenty, or thereabouts; and always behaved himself sober in his conversation, and no less just in his dealing, as some of us have experienced, having had occasion to employ him on several accounts, whereby, amongst other conversation, he had an opportunity of discoursing with some of our factory about matters of religion; and, as he now informs us, was thereby possessed with some notion, that the Messiah was already come; whereby, being uneasy under such a weighty doubt, he came thence for England about eighteen months ago, in order to acquire a full satisfaction. After some time here, he applied himself to some of us to recommend him to

some learned Divine for information; whereupon he was sent to the Rev. Dr. Allix, on whom some of us have since waited, who, requesting of us a character of the said Jonah, is the occasion of this paper, which we do in all respects believe to be true, and have a very good opinion of the probity and sincerity of the above-mentioned Jonah, and which, we trust, upon his examination, he will prove to the judgment of the most Reverend the Archbishops, the Right Reverend the Bishops, the Reverend the Clergy, and all other pious Christians, to whom we recommend him, &c.

“Done at London, this eight and twentieth day of May, one thousand seven hundred and nine.

“PETER FLEURIOT,
SAMUEL ROBINSON,
JOHN LODINGTON,
JOHN ADAMS,
VAL. NORTON,
ROBERT COLMORE,
THOMAS COLEMAN.

“These are to certify, that upon several discourses had with the afore-mentioned Jonah

Ben Jacob Xeres, I have found him very well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, and all other Jewish (particularly the Talmudic) learning; so that he was very ready, upon the chief objections the Jews make to the doctrine, divinity, and office of our Saviour. But, as he is endowed with very good natural and acquired parts, I was the more able to satisfy and convince him of the truth; so that, after having examined by Scripture all the most material controversies, he hath freely declared to myself, and his other friends, his desire to renounce the errors and prejudices of his education in the Jewish religion, and to embrace and profess the Christian faith.

“Witness my hand this 30th day of July, 1709.

“PETER ALLIX, D.D.”

AN ADDRESS TO THE JEWS, BY JOHN XERES.

I should not be a true disciple of my Saviour Jesus Christ, if I had not a tender affection for you, and an ardent desire of procuring your salvation. On His cross he prayed for those very persons who had crucified Him. (Luke

xxiii. 24.) It is therefore my duty, after His example, to offer up my prayers to God, that His anger being at length appeased, He would please to convert you. I think myself more particularly obliged to this duty, because during the time I have conversed with you, which has been above a year, you have not only been extremely civil, but have by all possible ways, expressed your love and affection for me.

I am descended of a family which has been settled at Saphia, a sea-port town of Barbary, in Africa, ever since the Jews were driven out of Spain. And I was born there of a father so zealous for his religion, that, being able to support the charge of such an education, he designed to make me a Rabbin. Accordingly, I have been brought up under the most famous of our doctors, and, though I have not yet been raised to that degree, many of you have had the opportunity of knowing that I have applied myself to study with some diligence; and that I have made no small progress in all those parts of learning which are necessary to qualify a person for that honourable title. I have been very well versed in the Scriptures from my earliest youth; and, for several years,

have been engaged in the study of the Talmuds, and of the Gemara, and I am sufficient master of that learning, to pass a true judgment upon it. I have for as long time been disturbed with several difficulties, and having had in my own country opportunities of conversing with Papists of Spain, and with Protestants of the Church of England, I have been desirous of learning from both of them their opinions, with respect to those doubts which perplexed me. I have been twice in Spain, and three times in Portugal; but the inquisition, under the protection of which I have been, was such a method of convincing and satisfying the mind as I can never approve of. The severity of that tribunal was, in my mind, directly opposite to the spirit of religion; and I could not see but that those doctors allow as little liberty of examination to the mind, as our Rabbins, who require their scholars to pay so blind, but entire a respect to their word and authority, as to believe their right hand is their left, if they please to affirm it.

The barbarous proceedings of the inquisition being so unfit to work upon my mind, I came over into England, hoping I might here meet

with satisfaction with respect to the great difficulties which disturbed my mind. And by the kind help of some of my friends, who have known me almost from infancy, and who are able to give an account of my manners and conduct, as they have been pleased to do, by the certificate that is prefixed to this address, I have been directed to a Divine of this Church, from whom I have happily received a resolution of those doubts, and an explication of those difficulties, which for so many years, had taken up my mind. One thing which in a very particular manner engaged my attention to him, was, that having been always offended with this maxim of our masters,—My son, have more regard to the words of the Rabbins than to the words of the law, he began with an exhortation to use my own judgment, and to consider seriously the force of those objections we make to the Christians, and to weigh impartially the answers which he proposed. For this purpose, he spent nearly four hours, in convincing me of the absurdity of the pretended oral law, which is so much talked of by our Rabbins, and confuted those persons who have deprived

our nation of their right of using a discretionary judgment in matters of religion, by talking of a great Sanhedrin which sat from Moses till the second destruction of Jerusalem; and by maintaining that the two Talmuds contain the decisions of that assembly, to which we ought to submit blindly, as to the greatest and most Divine authority which was then in the world.

All the arguments which you allege in vindication of this opinion, turn upon some passages of the Sacred Writings, which you wrest miserably, to answer your end and purpose. I shall insist upon one or two of them, and effectually expose the weakness of your reasonings.

The first you usually insist upon is taken out of Exodus,* Write thou these words, כִּי עַל פִּי הַדְּבָרִים וְהָאֵלֹה *Ki al pi hedavarim haelle*, that is, For after the tenor of these words, I have made,† &c. From whence you infer that the oral law is meant, because God

* Ch. xxxiv. 27.

† To make this argument more clear to those who do not understand Hebrew, it may be well to state, that the word כִּי *pe*, signifies *mouth*.—ED.

saith, על פי הדברים, *al de hadevarim*, that is, in your way of interpreting it תורה שבעל פה *tora shebaal pe*, to make a covenant according to the oral law. Another place to the same purpose is in Deuteronomy,* על פיה התורה, *al pe hatora*.

But the first place is so far from establishing the authority of the oral law, that it proves the direct contrary; for the הִיא *he*, which is twice repeated, and the אֵלֶּה *elle*, restrains the covenant to the words that are written, as any novice will easily perceive, who has the least smattering in the original. And, indeed, Onkelos and Jonathan met with no such thing in the text, for they have translated it "after the tenor," as it is in the English translation; for it must be confessed that that the פֶּה *pe*, often redounds in the Hebrew, as appears, upon examination, from many passages of Scripture.

Nay, you yourselves, must confess that the particles על פה *al pe*, כִּפֶּה *kepe*, and לִפֶּה *lepe*, signify only, according to, and never denote mouth. Add to this, that the particle כִּי *ki*, foreshows the reason why Moses was com-

* Ch. vii. 9, 10, &c.

manded by God to write these words—viz., For after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. Whereas no reason can be assigned why Moses was to write them, if he had been to make the covenant according to the oral law. As for that passage in Deuteronomy, there seems not the least difficulty in it, this of Exodus being first explained. For the Levites, or the judges that should be in those days, upon the people seeking to them, were to show them the sentence of judgment, as it was written in the book of the law, and they were obliged to abide by that determination.

Upon the entrance into the promised land, it was foretold the people of Israel, that they should have, in future time, a king set over them, as well as all the nations round about them had; and that after he should be fixed upon the throne, he was enjoined to write a copy of this law in a book, by which, if he steered the course of his life, he was to have great blessings to attend him; neither, as I can find, is there any injunction laid upon him, or any other of the Jews, farther than the observance of the written law.

To prove that the Talmud came in vogue since the establishment of the Mahometan religion, is no hard task, for it proves itself plainly by the word Ishmael, which they give to the followers of Mahomet's doctrine.

I have good reason to believe, that it did not arrive in Spain till the ninth century, at which time the major part of the Jews utterly rejected it, till in the days of Alphonsus, King of Castile, it was received after this manner : This prince had a physician, who was a Jew ; that same Jew, who was a Talmudist, persuaded his majesty to spare the lives of those Jews who were then his subjects, and had been guilty of sedition, and so sentenced to death, provided they would own and embrace the Talmud, which they did in order to save their lives. This happened at the end of the twelfth century. But it is to be observed, that a very considerable part of the Jews, who are spread in many parts of the world, disapprove of and reject the Talmud to this very day.

But to conclude this head, That the Gemara (which is only a full exposition of the Mishna) is a plain imposition—is so easy to be discovered, that there is no need I should spend many

words about it. It is true, indeed, the Rabbis mentioned in it are represented as very ancient, and as men that lived many hundred years before it was compiled; for the compilers of it had just so much sense as to mention those Rabbis who had lived many ages before them, as the authors of what they were pleased to advance. And the reason of this their behaviour was—first, to avoid the persecutions, which they justly feared, from the Christians and Mahometans, who, in several places of the Gemara, were severely treated and reflected upon. Secondly, to give their people to understand that the Karaite Jews were mere Innovators in the Jewish religion.

By such arguments as these I was convinced of the great error I long laboured under, and I wish they may have the same effect upon your minds.

I was extremely pleased with three particulars in the method the Divine took, and by which I was thoroughly convinced of his sincerity.

1st. A third person, who assisted at our Conferences, gave me, the next day after every conversation we had together, during almost

three months, a short recapitulation of what had been said on both sides, that so I might carefully inquire whether I was fully satisfied with his answers, and propose afresh those difficulties which were not cleared up.

2nd. According to his promise, he made use of no argument in the dispute, but according to the original, explained by the parallel places where the same subject is handled.

3rd. He offered to supply me with all Jewish books, such as the Talmuds, the ancient Midraschim, the Jewish commentaries on Scripture, and principally those which treat of the controversy with the Christians; such as the Chissouk Emouna, and Abarbanel, who is most esteemed by our nation. And, before our conversation began, he lent me such as I desired to consult. After this, he easily convinced me that I ought to read the New Testament, which is the only rule of the Christian faith; and, that I might read it with the greater ease, he gave me a version of it in Hebrew.

I applied myself closely to the reading of the Gospel, and have found the following effects of it:—

1st. I understood the plan of the Christian

religion better than I had done, from what I had heard of it in my own country.

2nd. Hereupon I found myself in a much fairer way to receive satisfaction, with respect to my difficulties, than I had been before.

3rd. Hereby I found an exact conformity between the books of Moses and of the prophets, and of those of the New Testament, though your doctors, prepossessed as they are with prejudices, do all they can to make them contradict one another.

I earnestly wish you would read those books as I have done; for, I doubt not, but you would then see with admiration, that Jesus Christ, during His ministry, was taken up in the following affairs:—

1st. In reforming the corruptions which were crept in among our fathers, with respect to several parts of that moral doctrine which God had prescribed by Moses; of which corruptions several are at this time found in your Talmud authors by your doctors. And this He could not do without stirring up the fury of those persons, on whom He charged those corruptions so home. And this was, certainly, the principal cause of His death; for, He tells

them plainly enough that they knew He was the Messiah; but that they were afraid they should lose their own authority, if they submitted unto His. (Matt. xxi. 33.)

2nd. In establishing such pure and perfect rules of morality and piety, as above all others are fitted to raise human nature to the highest degree of perfection.

3rd. In teaching the Jews the true sense of some prophecies respecting the Messiah; to which they had not given sufficient attention.

4th. You would find, that in His discourses He had interwoven several illustrious prophecies concerning those things He came to suffer from the Jews; concerning what should happen to His disciples; concerning the fate of the Jews, who should crucify Him; concerning the false Messiahs, who should abuse the credulity of our nation; concerning those things which, after His death, should befall His Church, which His disciples should form; concerning the persecutions it was to suffer, and its prodigious increase unto that greatness in which you see it now appear.

Can you read such relations without being moved thereby, and without concluding that

since the Christian religion was opposed for several ages, both by the Jews and by the heathens, there is no more room to doubt of the miracles which were wrought by Christ and His apostles, than of Moses, and of the prophets that came after him?

Whatsoever your Talmudist doctors have objected against the miracles of Christ and of His apostles, is frivolous cavil, and may, with equal ease, be turned by an heathen against Moses.

In pursuance of what I am about, I shall consider some few passages in the Prophets, which, according to you and us, have an undeniable relation to the coming of the Messiah promised to our nation, in sundry places of the sacred pages.

God's design, in separating Abraham with the rest of the patriarchs, and afterwards the Jewish nation, from the other part of mankind, was, that it might be known that the Messiah, according to the flesh, arose from that people, and because Jacob was the first who restrained that promise to the family of Judah, I shall therefore make choice of this first prophecy, to prove that the Messiah is already come.

Jacob, upon his death-bed, ordered all his sons to gather themselves together, and, according to the unerring Spirit he was filled withal, foretold to all his children, what should be their lot in the land of Canaan, whether their state and condition should be prosperous or unfortunate; and, among the rest, when he comes to Judah, he says: * “Judah, thou art he, whom thy brethren shall praise; thy hand, &c. The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” These last words afford us a threefold consideration: 1st. That the שבט, *Shebet*, sceptre should be in Judah. 2nd. That in process of time, there should be a מוֹדָק, *Mekokek*, that is, a law-giver, a dignity inferior to that of kings. And in the third place, that שִׁלֹה, *Shiloh* should come before the departure of the שבט, *Sceptre*, and מוֹדָק, *Mekokek*, out of Judah.

Now, this prophecy of Jacob did not begin to take place till David was made king, and then it received part of its accomplishment. And this sceptre שבט, *Shebet*, (or kingly

* Gen. xlix. 8, 9, 10.

power, as you, yourselves, confess, see Rashi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and the Targum has translated that word by kings), continued to the days of Zedekiah. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the מִזְרֵקֵן, *Mekokek* took footing, that is, an inferior order to kings (מִזְרֵקֵן, *Mekokek*, a prince or law-giver: Rashi upon Ps. lx. 9). For Zerubbabel was the first מִזְרֵקֵן, *Mekokek*, or Law-giver; and this sort of government continued for some time with some little change and alteration, even under the Maccabees, until the Romans laid waste the Holy City; since which time they have never been able to make themselves a people, or gain a possession of the land of Canaan. The שִׁלֹּחַ, *Shiloh*, that is, the Messiah, as you, yourselves, acknowledge upon that place of Gen. was to come before the departure of the שֶׁבֶט, *Sceptre*, and of the מִזְרֵקֵן, *Mekokek*, out of the tribe of Judah. This is the meaning of that prophecy.

Then with respect to the time, the Christians have quite the advantage over your forefathers. Jesus Christ came in the time appointed by God, and he suffered at the time expressed by the prophets. Whereas, if the

Messiah you expect should come now, you could not say he came to fulfil those prophecies that speak of him, for they fix another period for his appearance and his death—viz., before the second destruction of Jerusalem. But besides all this, if the Messiah did not come at the time which was foretold by the prophets, it follows, that you ought to reject those prophecies as absolutely false. For surely that prophecy deserves no better a character, which, instead of being fulfilled, is contradicted by the event.

Perhaps you will answer me, that the sins of your fathers have been the cause that God has not sent the Messiah at the time he had fixed for his coming.

Upon this principle your Rabbins tell you, that the appearance of the Messiah can only be hastened by your repentance; but herein, they grossly impose upon you. For—

1st. To what purpose do they trouble themselves to find out different periods for the coming of the Messiah, from those that are past, since they can signify nothing without your repentance? Yet their writings are full of computations of the periods they assign for

the Messiah's appearance. I dare venture to say, that all the periods which have been fixed upon by those your doctors, are past above 150 years ago. Read R. Saadiah, Ramban, Bachai, Ralbag, R. Joseph Ben Jacchia, Don Isaac Abarbanel, and other calculators, you will see that every one of them have fancied they had found out the secret notwithstanding the curse pronounced by your Talmudists, who pray that all those who shall compute the times of the Messiah, may burst asunder.

2nd. Why have they invented that ridiculous imagination, which many of your learned men have embraced, that towards the end of those terms of years which they fix, God shall raise up one or more very cruel kings, who by dreadful persecutions shall force you to repent ; and, that upon this, the Messiah shall appear to deliver you ? Why should God take this care towards the end of the terms, which they now gather from the mistaken sense of some prophecies, since he did not in those other periods which your doctors acknowledge to be past ? You must needs see that these fancies of your Rabbins are vain and groundless.

But I come to the point of the two Messiahs,

one of which is to be the son of David, as the other shall be the son of Joseph, of the tribe of Ephraim. This is a late invention, which was never heard of before the Talmud. The Chaldee paraphrast of the prophets knows nothing of it ; but it is to be found in Onkelos. And a mere fancy it is.

It is very likely that hereafter we shall be told, that, as the Messiah the son of David is to have the souls of Adam and of David, so the son of Joseph shall have the souls of the patriarch Joseph, and of Jeroboam.

The truth is, that this foolish notion is gathered from the prophecy of Obadiah, who speaks of the courage of the ten tribes after their return from Assyria, who, he says, were to be attacked by the kings of Syria, and afterwards should subdue the Edomites. But this prophecy was all fulfilled by the *Hasmonæi*, under the Syrian kings, as it is related by the most exact of the Jewish historians.

By the imagination of a two-fold Messiah, the Jews have thought this story proper to serve a very considerable design ; for they concluded, that they should conceal from the readers of the prophecies, the true meaning of

those prophecies, which speak of the death of the Messiah, the son of David, by teaching, that they should have their accomplishment in the person of Messiah, the son of Joseph.

As this point of the coming of the Messiah, whom you still expect, is one of the great principles you go upon in your controversy with the Christians, you will not be displeased if I again tell you, that by supposing the Messiah is yet to come, you overturn the authority of the ancient prophecies, and betray your own cause to the atheists, and to those who make a jest of religion. Jacob prophesied that Shiloh, that is, the Messiah, should appear before your state should be utterly destroyed.

After the seventy years of the captivity, Zerubbabel and his successors, were the rulers of the people, and governed till the times of the Hasmonæi, of whom seven governed you, according to the prophecy of Micah v., and eight bore the name of kings. Since then you could never enjoy the supreme power yourselves. The Romans set over you that idol shepherd, according to Zechariah's prophecy, whom your own *Josephus ben Gorion*,

confesses to have been Herod ; and your civil constitution has been irrecoverably overturned, according to prophecy in Dan. ix. Hence it necessarily follows, either that Jacob's prophecy was false, or that the Messiah, whoever he was, did actually appear before your last destruction.

Your ancient masters saw the force of this reasoning, and therefore tell you, that he was indeed born about the time of the last destruction, but conceals himself until a certain time, when he will appear and destroy Rome. They have invented several fables to countenance this notion of the Messiah's birth, as attended this particular circumstance, which they esteem a very critical point. But, unhappily, their own party opposes them in this matter, and much more generally asserts that the Messiah is not yet born.

Your masters have invented fables concerning the legislators, which they say they have ; but wherever they are, they live *incognito*, for nobody could ever learn of any other masters they have, than those who teach in their schools.

Both you Jews, and we Christians, own and

acknowledge that there neither is, nor can be but one eternal ever-living God, the Creator of heaven and earth, as we read in Deut.* "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." This being a matter so plain, and self-evident, there is little need of fetching any farther proofs from the sacred writings to convince either the one or the other; or to persuade them to the belief thereof. Let but any considerate person ponder awhile with himself, his own reason will necessarily induce him to gather from various considerations the existence of a God, and at the same time convince him that there is but one.

The notion we frame to ourselves of a God supposes this, for when we say we believe a God, our meaning is, that we conceive him to be an infinite being, of all imaginable and possible perfection. Now to suppose many infinite and perfect beings, implies an absolute contradiction, wherefore such a notion destroys a plurality of Gods.

But as to the nature of the Deity, it is confessed on all hands, that our shallow reason can never conceive such an immensity, therefore

* Chap. vi. 4.

we are obliged to have recourse to the sacred pages, the only sure and safe guide in such an inexplicable mystery; and there we are like to meet with the best and clearest information we can expect in so nice and sublime a subject.

The sum of what they teach is as follows: Moses and the prophets after him (whose great design was to establish the unity of the Godhead, and to extirpate polytheism, then very flagrant in the world), when they speak of the Almighty One, generally mention him after such a manner, that the expressions they use import in them a plurality in the one only essence of the being spoken of.

What means else the frequent mention of God by nouns of the plural number; as Gen. i. 1, בראשית ברא אלהים *Bereshit bara Elohim*, where the word אלהים *Elohim*, which is rendered God, is of the plural number, though annexed to a verb of the singular number, which demonstrates as evidently as may be, that there are several persons partakers of the same Divine nature and essence? Otherwise, if there was but one person concerned in the creation, why does Moses so often repeat these expressions, "And God said let there be such

and such things, and it was so." But the reason why Moses repeats those expressions so often, will appear, if we compare his description of the creation with that given by the psalmist (Ps. xxxiii. 6,) in these words; "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the רוח *Rouach*, Spirit of his mouth;" where this phrase, "the word of the Lord," answers to Moses' expression, "God said," and the spirit of his mouth answers to Moses' expression, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters;" and it is farther plain, if we consult Proverbs viii. 30, where God addressed himself to his eternal wisdom, who in the beginning disposed all things.

Add to this the celebrated place of Deut.* "Hear O Israel," יהוה אלהינו *Jehova Eloenou* (in the plural number,) the Lord thy God, is יהוה אחד, *Jehovah Ekad*, One God. From whence I thus argue, "He that is יהוה אלהינו, *Jehova Eloenou*, and יהוה אחד, *Jehova Ekad*, is one in essence, and in that one essence there are several persons. But God, of whom it is said, "Hear O Israel," &c., is

* Chap. vi. 4.

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, *Jehova Elohenou*, and יְהוָה אֶחָד, *Jehova Ekad*. Therefore the God worshipped by the Jews, and of whom it is said, "Hear O Israel, &c., is one in essence, and in that one essence there are several persons.

And here I desire you, my brethren, to observe, that the Christians do not from these and such like places pretend to prove precisely a Trinity of persons, but only indefinitely that there is some sort of plurality in the Godhead. For if this be once admitted as a thing supposed by Scripture, viz., that a plurality of persons subsists in the Divine essence, it thence also follows, that there is no absurdity in supposing that a Trinity of persons can subsist in the Divine nature. Besides, if it be farther demonstrated that the Great God Jehovah is One, but one after such a manner, as that a plurality of persons may without any absurdity be admitted in his Divine essence, it is plain, that if the Christians can prove that this plurality of persons amounts but to three, their faith in the Holy Trinity is well-grounded and established.

Nor can this plurality of persons, which the Christians admit of, make as well for the

idolatry of the Gentile world, as for the Trinity which they worship and adore. For the Christians, as well as the Jews, very strenuously contend for the Unity of God, but at the same time, grounding their faith upon the word of God, they admit of a plurality of persons in the Divine nature; to which faith of theirs the Gentile polytheism has not the least relation; because the Heathen, contrary to the express word of God, and to right reason, worshipped a plurality of Gods, that were different one from the other in person, essence, and operation. So that it is impossible for the Gentile world to prove after the same manner, and from those very expressions which the Christians allege in defence of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, to prove, I say, their almost infinite number of Gods. For the plurality of persons which the Christians contend for, is an undivided plurality, whereas theirs was a divided plurality, and by consequence, an indefinite number of divided Gods, ending (if I may so speak) in many Ones; which plurality the Christians as justly abhor as you do, it being contrary both to Scripture and right reason.

Your masters explain the prophecy in Deut. xviii. 15, concerning a succession of prophets, which God raised up among you ; whereas the Christians with very good reason apply it to the Messiah.

But let us grant for once, that your masters have found out the natural sense of the place. If it be allowed on the one hand, that for the space of 1496 years, viz., from your deliverance from Egypt, God kept this promise, how comes it to pass on the other hand, that since the time of Jesus Christ, that is for above 1600 years, there has not arisen among you one prophet to oppose those impostors, who from time to time have appeared and taken upon them the title of the Messiah, and thereby brought upon you new miseries and calamities?

Nay, more than this, during your first captivity, God gave you prophets ; Daniel, for instance, and his companions ; and Ezekiel, who was carried away under Jehoiakin ; and yet that captivity was to last but seventy years.

But he takes no such care of you as he did at that time. He has sent you no prophet to acquaint you how long these calamities shall

last, though you have now more need of it than ever.

I know very well, that to satisfy and quiet your people, your masters assert (the ark being destroyed when the first temple was destroyed, and there being none in the second), that the spirit of prophecy was never bestowed under the second temple, because it depended entirely upon the presence of the ark, which was the seat of the Shekinah.

To give a colour of truth to so gross an error, they tell us, that the three last prophets were the companions of Daniel, (x. 7).

But there is nothing more absurd. Zechariah was the grandson of Iddo, who returned from Babylon into Judea with Zerubbabel. Haggai and he were cotemporaries. Malachi prophesied a considerable time after them.

Nothing appears more absurd to a reasonable man than that notion of your masters which makes the appearance of your Messiah to depend upon that of a constellation, which is to come after a certain number of years.

Abarbanel pretends that when the Talmudists curse those who calculate the times, they mean such who are guided in their computa-

tions by the stars only, without having any regard to the prophecies. But after all the vain endeavours he has used in regulating his calculation according to the prophecies, he has added a computation by the course of the stars too.

You know how well he succeeded. If he had been in the right, your Messiah should have appeared above 150 years ago; whereas you have never yet heard any tidings of him. See his "Masmiah on Ezek. x." But this book has been reprinted for all that.

The most remarkable thing is, that in following this idea of the Heathen astrologers, though he is indeed so modest as to subject it all to God's will, he has run into all the extravagant absurdities which one could have expected from a judiciary astrologer, concerning the time of the Messiah.

Do but read the twelfth of his "Wells of Salvation," and you will see such a collection of ridiculous fancies of that nature, that you will wonder a Jew, who knew how that art was condemned by the prophets, should ever lay so much stress upon the authority of it. He does the same in his Masmiah Jeshua, and

in his Commentaries on the Prophets, and on the Five Books of Moses. You will find in his "Commentaries on Numbers xxiv.," that the Jews are now in captivity, by the influence of a certain constellation; and on Deut. xxxii. you will find, that God, that he may punish the Gentiles, disturbs the course of those planets that are favourable to them. The same thing he asserts on Isaiah xxxiv. He affirms that Jesus Christ, and his disciples after him, suffered death because he was born under Mars. He tells us that his people shall be redeemed under a certain constellation (Is. lv. 17), as he was redeemed at first from Egypt. And this he repeats on Jeremiah xxxiii., and on Ezekiel xlv. He instanceth particularly in the month Nisan. The same fancy he repeats on Hosea i. and on chap. iii.

But the most ridiculous jest of these your astronomical calculations, is, that your best chronologers are not agreed concerning the true duration of the world from its creation to this present time: so that none of your computations by the stars can be adjusted with your account of the years of the world, according to the prophecies.

But Abarbanel is not the only man who makes this use of astrology. He only followed the authority of his masters who went before him.

Now tell me sincerely, can there be any need of a more evident proof that you have renounced the authority of Moses and of the prophets, than what is gathered from this hypothesis, which was first received from the Heathens, who were first led into it by the deceits of the devil?

I shall add but one remark more, concerning Isaiah liii. When your masters speak to you of the Targum, they tell of a great many miracles which were wrought to confirm its authority, and make it unquestionable. And yet your Rabbins make a jest of its authority, and never pay any deference to it but when they find it favours their notions.

The Targum applies Isaiah lii., from v. 13, and the whole of chap. liii. to the Messiah. So does your Pesikta, and your ancient books, the Tanchuma and Siphre. R. Moseh and R. Nephtali are of the same opinion. But read after this your other commentators, and you will find, that R. Saadiah applied the whole prophecy to Jeremiah. Others suppose the prophet to speak in general of any good man.

Thus in the Talmud one refers it to Moses, another to R. Akiba; Rashi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, Lipman, and Abarbanel, explain it concerning the people of the Jews. In a word, Abarbanel affirms, that it may also be understood of Josiah, who was slain by Pharoah Necho.

Hereby you see how you are imposed upon by your several commentators, and how they follow every man his own imaginations, without expressing much concern for the truth.

If that prophecy speaks of the Messiah, as your ancient authors agree it does, how can it be applied to your whole nation, as you have done for these five or six hundred years? Or if it treats of a whole people, how can it be explained of Josiah?

Do not you perceive how your Rabbins impose upon you? Their forefathers acknowledged the truth, but the modern set have perverted the sense of the prophecy, referring it to the people, and not to the Messiah, to whom it had been formerly applied. And with what design? Why, to increase the number of the questions in controversy between them and the Christians.

Be prevailed with to consider a little the

unfairness of such a way of proceeding. This prophecy of Isaiah is one of those upon which the Christians found one part of their system.

And, indeed, what judgment can be made of your masters, who accuse Jesus Christ of being a magician, and at the same time confess that he raised the dead (Toledoth Jeshu); for by that confession they must acknowledge that God may give a magician the power of raising the dead; and then adieu to all religion.

You have been all brought up in the belief of a silly story, that Christ being cast off by the Rabbin who taught him, went away in a fit of ill-humour, and laid two bricks athwart each other, in the form of a cross, which he made his disciples worship; as, indeed, about the time when the Talmud was written, they saw the Christians doing such things among the Eastern Christians.

Now after this, say you, can we believe Christ to be the Messiah that God was to send to us? If your Rabbins had found such an institution in the gospel, I confess you would have had all the reason in the world to reject it. But what you mention is nothing but a paltry story, which your masters raised against the

Christians, because of the blind zeal and fury with which they raged when they were become idolaters. I am informed, that there never were any images made nor worshipped by the Christians for above 300 years after Christ. But ought any man to reject the law of Moses, which forbids idolatry under the severest penalties, only because there was a time when Israel and Judah served the calves which Jeroboam made, and when they publicly worshipped the images of Baal? The gospel, far from proposing such objects of worship, plainly foretels this corruption which should seize the Christians, just as you find in the books of Moses predictions of the idolatry which should reign among the posterity of those men, to whom God had given his law with so many miracles.

You are justly offended at the religious worship which is paid to saints and angels by the Papists, who consecrate churches to them, and apply themselves to them as to mediators between God and men. But those persons who do thus are idolaters in the sense of the gospel, and of all true Christians. For these latter believe that there is but one only mediator between God and man, Jesus the High Priest,

who, having made a propitiation for our sins, ascended into heaven, the true sanctuary, and there intercedes for us to obtain the blessings and graces of which we stand in need.

You are justly offended that the Church of Rome, which prays for your conversion every Easter, should yet pretend to a right of persecuting you, in order to make you embrace her opinions, contrary as they are to reason, and to the law which God gave you on Sinai. But if you read the writings of the evangelists and apostles, you will find therein maxims directly opposite to this spirit of persecution. Jesus Christ rebuked the zeal of his disciples, when they called upon him to punish the Samaritans, who had rejected him with contempt. And he teaches, that the tares must be spared until the harvest, that is, until the day of judgment.

If it be true that the Messiah is come, and did answer those characters by which He is described in the revelation God has given us, by rejecting Him you are guilty of the greatest crime you can commit against God, who sent Him to you.

If by the misfortune of your birth, you are

engaged in a society which hates Him, though it be now actually under those Divine judgments which He denounced against them, it is your duty, at least when you have attained such an age, in which you are capable of examining matters of religion, to consider seriously such important questions as these are, and to endeavour to attain such satisfaction, that you may be assured you do not follow blind guides.

You are among those Christians who have reformed from the errors, the false worship, and the idolatry of the Roman Church. It is your duty to improve this advantage you have. The pastors of this church are such, against whom you can have no exception, since they teach this maxim, that no man is saved by the faith of his pastor; but that all are obliged to examine the doctrines that are proposed to them, but to embrace none except those which shall appear unto them to be agreeable to the Divine revelation.

There is no inquisition here, to use violence with your conscience, and to oblige you to dissemble your real sentiments. I beg of you, therefore, that you would make use of those

means, which the good Providence of God favours you with, and as I lay before you the defence of the profession I have made of the Christian religion in the Reformed Church of England, so I conjure you to examine it with care and attention.

It is the effect of that great affection I have for you in particular, and for all those of mine own nation; for I desire nothing with greater earnestness, than by my own example and exhortations, to be instrumental in leading you into the way of salvation, wherein the infinite mercy and goodness of God has happily placed me, and wherein I am fully resolved to persevere unto my life's end.

I pray to the Almighty with all my might, that He would be pleased to enlighten your minds, and deliver you from those prejudices you labour under; that so the great and fundamental truths here laid before you, may make a deep and lively impression upon your hearts, and be an effectual means to bring about your conversion to the Christian religion, and not rather serve to increase your condemnation.

JOHN XERES.

JEWISH WITNESS.—No. X.

A SHORT NOTICE OF THE LATE
EMMANUEL SCHWEITZER.

“The memory of the just is blessed.”

The following account of Emmanuel Schweitzer is reprinted *verbatim* from the “Voice of Israel,” it appearing to me unnecessary to alter the style from the third, to the first person. I may simply mention that he was a regular attendant on my ministry from the time of his being first seriously awakened, until his death; and that I was one of those who received his dying testimony of the all-sufficiency of Christ and His salvation.

By the common consent of mankind, the memory of the philosopher, of the patriot, and of the poet, is accounted worthy of all honour; while God says, “The memory of the just is blessed.” We, therefore, who profess to weigh all things in the balance of the sanctuary, are

not called upon to make any apology to our readers for introducing to their notice a departed saint of God, who in this life was poor and unknown, but is now one of the glorious company who sing the ever new song of the redeemed.

Did any of our readers ever encounter in one of the steamers on the Thames, a man of modest deportment, and rather diminutive size, plying his vocation as a cutter of profiles? We can imagine the look of good-humoured contempt with which his diffident request for employment was often complied with. It is indeed characteristic of vain man, that he "looketh on the outward appearance;" and considers not that the faded garment may cover a heart more noble than his own; that the mind which dwells within that mean exterior, is not only a partaker of the joys and sorrows common to humanity, but may have traversed a range of mental experience far higher than his own; it may have encountered struggles he has never known, and achieved victories of which he has not even an idea.

Emmanuel Schweitzer was born at Breslau, of Jewish parents, in the year 1809. Being of a

delicate constitution, his early education was much interrupted ; but he had a great thirst for knowledge, and very soon displayed a mechanical turn. He was first apprenticed to a draughtsman and engraver ; but it was afterwards thought better to teach him a mechanical trade. During the term of his apprenticeship, he suffered, as every Jew does, much annoyance from his Gentile fellow-workmen ; but his conduct was such as to gain him the approbation of his master.

In 1835 he came to England, which was the native country of his mother. Here he obtained employment at his trade ; but an internal ailment, from which he suffered, rendered bodily labour painful and difficult ; and he at length abandoned it for the profession of an artist.

He had been brought up by his parents as a strict Jew ; but when he entered on the business of the world, he became lax in his practice and opinions. He continued to pursue the downward road of infidelity, until he landed in complete Atheism. In this dark and hopeless state he continued until January, 1842, when it pleased the Lord to visit him with sickness,

that messenger of mercy, which is so often sent to recal the wandering sons of men to their Father's house, During his illness he was visited by a Jewish brother, who had long known him, and who had been for some years a convert to Christianity. The counsels which Schweitzer had rejected with scorn in the time of health, were again offered him in this time of affliction. In the prospect of death infidelity has no consolation to offer ; the only hope she can hold out is annihilation, a fate from which humanity instinctively shrinks. The message of a full and free salvation was a more welcome sound ; and the sufferer listened patiently at least, if not with approbation. No immediate change in his views appeared : but the arrow of conviction had been fixed in his heart ; and soon after his recovery, he told his friend that he felt himself a great sinner. He could not see Jesus as the promised Redeemer ; and therefore saw no way of escape from the just anger of a holy God. He had been exhorted to pray earnestly for light and guidance ; he said he did not dare to pray in his own words, but that his daily prayer to God was in the words of Psalm xxv. 4, 5 : " Shew me thy

ways, O Lord, teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day."

His conscience was now so awakened that he could no longer pursue his worldly calling on the Lord's day; although the profits of that day had hitherto been his chief support during the week. He found much benefit from reading "Baxter's Call to the Unconverted;" and told his friend he was almost convinced that Christ was the promised Messiah; but before fully making up his mind on the subject, he would like to hear the objections of some learned Jew. A meeting was arranged with a clever and able disputant; but his arguments only more fully convinced Schweitzer of the truth of Christianity.

During all this time he regularly attended the preaching of the word, sometimes at one place of worship, and sometimes at another; and was often powerfully affected by the tender invitations of the gospel, as well as by the danger and guilt of a state of impenitence. To the instructions thus received, to that ordinance of preaching whereby it pleases God "to

save them that believe," (1 Cor. i. 21.) he attributed his conversion to the faith of Christ. On the 13th of May, 1842, he was baptized at John Street Chapel; it being his own wish to be baptized by immersion.

From that time, until it pleased the Lord to remove him hence, Schweitzer walked as a sincere, humble, consistent, follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He continued to prosecute his calling during six days of the week; and on the Lord's day joyfully joined the assembly of Christians to whose fellowship he was admitted soon after his baptism. The happy hours he spent in the house of God, compensated for the labour, the disappointments, the precarious support, by which he was tried during the week. In the winter season, when the steamers afforded no customers, he often found great difficulty in getting employment; yet he was never forsaken by his Heavenly Father—help came at the moment it was needed. "Often have I gone out in the morning," said he to a friend, "with a heavy yet a confiding heart; and before evening I have been helped in a way that I knew not of." His was indeed a life of faith, and his

faith was often severely tried. We have seen, that, at a very early period of his enquiry after Christianity, he gave up following his calling on the Lord's day ; this was a sacrifice he was often afterwards called to make. On one occasion, when he was much in want of a sum of money to pay what was due, he received an offer of the exact amount required, if he would attend on that day at a house in the west end of London, to cut profiles ; which offer he at once rejected. Another very lucrative opening presented itself, that of attending in the refreshment-room connected with one of the places of public amusement. He did this for one evening, and gained as much in a few hours as he ordinarily did in as many days ; but though there was nothing positively sinful in any thing he saw, or heard there, he yet felt that attendance at such a place might bring a stain on his religious profession, and he at once abandoned it. When we say of any one—“He left all and followed Christ,” the world asks, “What did he leave? had he great possessions?” In these days it does not often fall to the lot of the rich to leave all for Christ's sake ; it is the poor alone who enjoy this

honor. Many a poor saint is obliged for conscience-sake to give up "all he had, even all his living." But their Father knoweth what things they have need of; and he forsakes none of them that put their trust in him.

The internal ailments under which Schweitzer laboured, increased much during the two last years of his life; and often caused him such excruciating pain, that he told a friend, had he not been a Christian, and enjoyed the consolations and bright hopes of the gospel, he would have committed suicide. In the beginning of September, 1844, he found himself so ill, that he wished to go into an hospital. His Christian friends objected to this, and offered to procure him whatever attendance he might require, at his own lodgings; but he expressed his decided preference for the airy apartments, and entire freedom from outward cares, that those asylums afford. He was therefore admitted into University College Hospital. There, the friends who visited him, were for more than three weeks privileged to witness his patience, his faith, and his hope; the serenity with which he looked forward to death, not only as a happy release from suffering, but as an entrance into life

everlasting ; a departure to be with Christ — with that Saviour whom he loved, and who had loved him. He fell asleep in the Lord on the 25th of September, and the following week was interred in New Bunhill Fields, Islington. Though a stranger in a strange land, and forsaken, (with one honourable exception) by all his kindred according to the flesh, he was followed to the grave by many sincere mourners. Several of his converted brethren, and other Christian friends who knew and loved him, committed his body to the tomb, “in the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection.” “Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.” “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law ; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians, xv. 56, 57.

Dear brethren of the house of Israel ! we affectionately ask you, if *you* can thus triumph over death ? Can you say—“O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?” You know you cannot.

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